

VILLAGE DISCOURSES

ON

Important Subjects :

*PARTICULARLY ADAPTED TO DOMESTIC
WORSHIP.*

BY THE LATE

REVEREND JOHN CENNICK.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,
THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

Revised and enlarged,

AND A RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE,

BY

MATTHEW WILKS.

PART I.

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'PREFACE,

BY THE EDITOR.

THE following Sermons of the Rev. JOHN CENNICK contain the leading and most important topics of christianity. They have heretofore been made instrumental in awakening many readers to a serious inquiry after the salvation of their souls. Having been a long time out of print, it affords me pleasure to see them republished; and I humbly trust that the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to glorify the alone Saviour of sinners, will witness to the truth in many consciences, and make it the power of God to salvation.

Although the style of these discourses is extremely plain, and may admit of considerable emendation, yet I have thought it most adviseable not to make any material alteration therein, partly out of respect to the memory of the Author, and partly from a hope that the artless simplicity in which his sentiments are conveyed will rather conciliate, than offend the christian reader.

The annexed life, as far as to the period

of his entering into the ministry, was principally written by himself, with the professed design, "that all men may see and hear what God had done for his soul, and especially that those who have followed after righteousness by the works of the law, and have been ready to faint, at not having found it, might be encouraged to look to the free mercy of God, in the death of Jesus Christ, and there obtain remission of sins, and the peace that passes all understanding."

In completing the biography of Mr. CENNICK, I have had recourse to his correspondence with Mr. Whitefield. I have also availed myself of the information of a brother minister, who, though unacquainted personally with Mr. CENNICK, was intimate with Mr. Adams, his fellow labourer, and with whom he has held frequent conversation concerning him; but, I am principally indebted, for copious materials, to his only surviving daughter, the wife of the Rev. Mr. Swertner of Bristol.

M. WILKS.

PREFACE,

PREFACE,

BY THE AUTHOR.

SEVERAL of these Sermons have been published some years ago, and our Saviour has blessed them in the world; may he do the same by the others which are now, or may be, added to them. He has chosen things that are base, and mean, and small, to serve to his glory, and therefore I dedicate this collection of discourses to him, and pray him not to despise them nor me. I am his servant, and willingly put my mite into the treasury of the many blessed writings of his ministers of all ages.

The subject of these discourses is sincere christianity; viz. Jesus Christ's Divinity, his Eternal Existence, his supreme Majesty, Incarnation, Sufferings, and Death, by which he has saved the world, and brought life and immortality into it. This I believe, and am persuaded of, and this I announce and publish with all my heart, and with all my strength, in preaching and writing, and this, as I said, is the Matter of these Sermons.

Besides what respects our imitation of him, and being his disciples in all good
B 2 works,

works, patience, and in a strict and religious life, the doctrines of our fall, our spoiled and wicked nature, our faith in Jesus, our experience of his grace, our assurance of salvation, our being his witnesses and children, our election and free justification, are constantly herein treated of.

The whole collection are generally paraphrases and dissertations on the miracles and parables of our Saviour. They are simple and plain, and suited for sincere people, who do not want somewhat curious or diverting, but salvation : if by this means a soul can be awakened, or comforted, or led to believe in the Lord Jesus who was crucified for us, and gets forgiveness of sin ; or if a devout soul, a lover of the Lamb, can hereby be helped and forwarded to him, or be at all assisted in his way to heaven, I ask no more.

I wish such as read it to remember me as long as they know I am alive, and pray for me, that I may labour with the presence and blessing of the Lord my Master, and finish the course of my ministry with joy. I am, in him,

Your willing brother and Servant,

JOHN CENNICK.

Dublin,
Dec. 12, 1753.

L I F E

OF

MR. JOHN CENNICK.

MY grandfather and grandmother Cennick, were once very great clothiers; but when George Fox and William Penn began preaching, they became Quakers, and in the days of Oliver Cromwell, and in part of King Charles's reign, they suffered the loss of all things, and were imprisoned in Reading gaol, and (I have heard my mother say) were so far reduced, that my grandmother knit or wove half-penny laces for her living, in the prison. In several books published by the Quakers of their sufferings, mention is made of them: but my father, after he was married to my mother, was baptized in the church, and from my infancy I was carefully instructed by my mother in the principles of religion; who also kept me strict to church, and taught me prayer morning and evening, and would not suffer me to play on the Lord's-day, but confined me to read or say hymns all day long with my sisters. This I then counted the worst of bondage, and indeed cruelty. So very prone was I to be disobedient and wicked, even when young; I then envied other children who were not restrained as I was, and hoped, as I grew up, to get their liberty.

When I was very young indeed, I remember my mother led me to see an aunt of her's who was then on her death-bed. I came first into the room where she lay, and heard her saying to the maid who attended her, "Mary, I have

have something to say to you; it may be you may think it a lie, but indeed it is truth. This night the Lord stood by me, and invited me to drink of the fountain of life freely; and I shall stand before the Lord bold as a lion." I found, as she spake these words with uncommon chearfulness, my blood chilled in my veins, and I was struck to the heart! I was set upon praying immediately, that before I died I might know, as I thought my aunt did, that I should go to heaven. Soon after my mother came into the room, and hearing the dying woman shout for joy, and cry out in such assurance of faith, she drew near, and said with tears, Poor soul! My aunt scarce heard her speak but she cried out, "Who dares call me poor! I am rich in Christ! I have got Christ! I am rich!" and after this manner she rejoiced till we left her. The words she uttered indeed pierced my soul, so that I could not rest day nor night, but was wishing continually after, if I thought of death or sickness, O that I may be assured of heaven before I die! and began to fear to die greatly. These were the most early convictions I can remember; nor do I know any time between whiles, till my conversion, when I did not meditate on my aunt's last words; for it was not long after I had seen her, that she slept in the bosom of the Lamb. Now although at times I was inclined to be serious and dutiful, till I was about twelve or fourteen years old, I lived (as other young children) fond of play, of fine cloaths, and of praise, but afraid to swear, or to take God's name in vain.

My natural temper was obstinate, and my lips were full of lies continually; nor could any one be more furious when provoked or angered; but after my passion was over, I commonly dreaded to go to bed, lest I should drop into hell before morning. Nor did I dare to sleep till I had said my prayers, and promised God how good I would be the next day. And this was also my way of buying pardon from God, when I had sinned in any gross way, as by lying, sabbath-breaking, stealing from my school-fellows, or disobedience to my parents,
being

being often mindful of those words, "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

As I was taught, so I kept constant to daily prayers at St. Laurence's church in Reading, the town of my nativity, till I was about thirteen. I then went to London with an intent to be there apprenticed to some trade; but, being disappointed, I returned with my mother; and soon after, hearing of another place, I went again, eight times, but still without effect; not being permitted by divine providence to agree with any, though my will was much then to be in the world, promising myself great peace and many enjoyments, when I should come to be my own master. I was, at last, on trial with a carpenter; but when the time was come that I should be bound, some objections were made by my master, who thought me too young, and chose to stay till the other apprentices were out of their time. Thus was I unsettled again, God having provided some better thing for me.

When I came to be near fifteen, I began to be very uneasy for want of employment, and strove to find out a business in which I might work at home, and ease myself of so many fruitless journies. I began to learn two or three trades, and longed to get money, that I might have wherewith to give to the poor, and do as I pleased. I thought how religious, how thankful, and charitable I would then be; yea, and was so persuaded I should be rich, that I made a promise, and wrote it down, "To build a chapel, and erect a more strict order in the church, wherein people should fast duly according to the rubric, and sit up all night in prayer, and go plain in apparel." But when I had learnt the art of buying and selling, and laid out much money, my heart failed, so that I could not consent to set up a public shop, though my mother had built one for me. No one can imagine the fear that came upon me when I thought of it; suppose none should buy of me, thought I, then I shall be starved;

starved; or obliged to run away by night, and perish in solitude. Thus restrained, I worked privately, and contented myself with getting just enough for food and raiment, and yet keeping more and more to duties at church and in the closet, I said in my heart, "Here I shall be happy."

From about fifteen I took delight to see and read plays, and to look into histories and romances. And surely, had it been in my power, plays would have had all my time, and I had forgot Jesus and everlasting ages: but, being prevented for want of money, I delighted myself in reading them, in singing songs, talking of the heathen gods, of the wars of the Jews and Greeks of Alexander the Great, and in the cursed delusion of playing, in seeing sights, in horse-races, in dancing-assemblies, revelling and walking with young company. Thus loving ungodliness more than goodness, and to talk of lies more than righteousness.

After this way I spent my life till Easter (I believe 1735) when as I was walking hastily in Cheapside, in London, the hand of the Lord touched me. I felt at once an uncommon fear and dejection, and though all my days since I could remember, had been bitter through the strength of convictions, and the fear of going to hell; yet I knew not any weight before like this. At first I thought it might be owing to my missing the Lord's-supper on Easter-day, which I had done, because I had not opportunity to fast in the Passion-week as I would, being at my brother's house, where I thought I should be laughed at for it; and I did not dare to communicate unprepared and without the wedding-garment.

I continued dull and thoughtful all the time I was in town; nor would sights and songs divert my trouble. I then thought it might be the thick, unhealthy air made me out of order, and by going into the country I should be well; but such a journey did I never take before. No sooner had I left the city, but "the terrors of the Lord came about me, and the pains of hell took hold on me." Though the sun shone beautifully, and the day was

was pleasant, it brought no comfort to me. I came to my house heavy and disconsolate, and would have prayed but could not. My grief was too great, and increased night and day exceedingly. "I grew feeble and was sore smitten, and roared for the very disquietness of my heart."

I went on thus near a year, hoping to get the victory over it, though utterly ignorant what my distemper was; often looking back to my innocent life, I wondered why God had singled out me to be made miserable: and, when I found freedom to pray, I begged the Lord to give me a friend who would join with me in religion, that in his company I might drive away my grief, and "go on my way rejoicing." Not long after I contracted an acquaintance with one who was serious, and in a short time with another, whom I soon loved better than the first: not for the regard he had to religion, but for his natural sweet temper, his good merry behaviour. And now we were so pleased with each other's company, that we were never so well as when we were together, especially when the other went to Oxford, and I was generally eased of my convictions all that while we were together: for so greatly did it displease the Lord, that he then withdrew his hand, and for awhile let me alone.

But it was not long before the weight returned, and whenever I was walking alone, either in the fields or roads, every thing appeared so strange and wild, that I often resolved not to look up, and wished to fly to some solitary place, where I might dwell in a cave, living on the leaves of trees, and feeding on the natural fruits of the earth. Whoever I met, I envied their happiness. Whatever I heard grieved me; and whatever I said or did, so troubled me, that I repented that I stirred or broke silence. If I laughed at any thing, my heart smote me immediately; and, if the occasion was a foolish jest or lie, I thought, alas! I helped to ruin not only my own soul, but the souls of others also; and such places of scripture would come into my mind, "Wo be to them that laugh now, for they shall mourn and weep."

And

And "without are dogs, and whoso loveth or maketh a lie." And "that they all may be damned who take pleasure in unrighteousness."

I left off singing songs, playing at cards, seeing plays, and such like, finding plainly they were vanity of vanities. And indeed, when I looked into the world, all things seemed to be unnatural and unpleasant, as if I had been banished into a foreign land; my own town, house, and relations being all strangers to me. Then I wished strongly to get into a Romish monastery, and to spend my life in holy retirement; but the want of money for my journey seemed to prevent me from doing it.

Often such a confusion of thought came upon me in bed, that I was forced to rise and walk about the chamber. If I was up, I endeavoured to overcome it by running, or eating, or talking; and when all these failed, I thought physic may do me good. And then I took physic, but, alas! the true physician I knew not. When between whiles I was somewhat easier, I began to cry "Peace to my soul: I have not been so very great a sinner as such a one's soul, be of good cheer." But my pangs soon returned, and the more I tried to quiet my accusing conscience, the more it testified against me, and my sorrows were so multiplied that I was even buried in affliction.

All this while I had no power over sin, nor the least strength to resist temptation; being carnal and sold under sin, I committed it continually, though not in the eyes of the world. My chief sins were "pride, murmuring against God, blasphemy, disobedience, and evil concupiscence;" sometimes I strove against them; but, finding myself always conquered, I concluded there was no help. Then was I weary of life, and often prayed that God would hide me in the grave, or at least suffer me to be mad, that I might not be sensible of my many misfortunes. Sometimes a spark of fear and hope, and hell and heaven, would so confusedly come into my mind, that, instead of opening my mouth, I was fixing my teeth together, lest I should utter them. Then the tempter

tempter so powerfully suggested, "God looked to the heart and not to the words," that I more and more thought I was predestinated to misery everlasting. Often too as I was walking, I found such strong temptations to curse and swear, that I have stood considering whether I had not really spoken; and I have expected every moment to have the devil let loose upon me, and to fall into all manner of wickedness.

When I was at church I was generally thinking how I should in time be rich, and what a stately church I would build—how the pillars should stand, and the altar be adorned with paintings—and in what form the communion-table should be placed, and how the windows should be painted: when the last prayer was reading, my terrors would return. My formal worship seemed plain mockery of God. I made promises to be more watchful; and, because my mind should not wander, I fixed my eyes on the devoutest of the congregation: but here also I found them to wander as before, and to envy them for being more devout than myself.

Finding so much dissatisfaction in all I did, not knowing sin from duty, or convictions from temptations, and considering "the prayers of the wicked were an abomination," I at last left off to pray: scarce had I done this, but the devil persuaded to me to say in my heart, "There is no God? who is God? no one ever saw him; how can I tell if he be God or not? if there were, he would not have pressed me to endure so much, knowing how religiously I have lived from my youth." Thus I reasoned with myself till I sunk deeper and deeper; yet, whenever I read the scripture, my heart so witnessed to the truth, that I could not help saying, "Doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth."

The night was more burthensome than the day; I started at every thing that stirred in the dark, fancying I should see apparitions in the corners of the room, or behind me, or in my way; and was continually afraid of meeting the devil. Then it came strongly to me, "If there be no God, why am I pressed to curse him?"

On which I began to pray again, yet almost in despair for the evil I had done, finding his face was still against me, and his wrath ready to swallow me up, I often despondingly said, "O why am I thy mark? Have I sinned more than all the sons of Adam? O that I had never been born, or died on the knees when I hanged yet on my mother's breast." The more I was assured of a divine Ruler by his repeated scourges, and the want of him in my heart, the more Satan pressed me to believe myself quite forsaken; and when I looked up toward heaven, I said, "Ah! I have no part there! the gate of that holy city is closed to every sinner, and no impure thing can enter therein. Alas! what shall I do in the-day of judgment? How shall I meet the Lord, when he shall come with ten thousand of his saints, and in flaming fire; but is there no pity with God? Must I be cast away from his eyes? Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious?" When no answer was given again, I ceased, and thought to bear my burthen and seek no more to be relieved, saying to myself, "All the days of my appointed time must I wait till my change come." And mean while the clouds covered me that I stood still and fixed my eyes on the trees, walls, or on the ground, amazed to measure, and often crying with a bitter cry, "What must I do to be saved?"

Among the many idle conceits I had of escaping, one was to travel by night to Salisbury plain, and there sit or wander about without food till y-plain, and there of my tedious life. Having fixed on I should be eased time of my setting out, I bade adieu to the world with tears. As I was eating a bit of bread, being alone, I spake thus, "I will now eat no more for ever. I shall now trouble the earth no more. I shall no more see any of my acquaintance or relations till I meet them in eternity." I then laid me down as I was, that I might be ready at the time: but God's providence so ordered that I awaked not till late the next morning, and so was again disappointed.

If ever I walked through fields where men were ploughing and sowing, I used to wish to be as one of them, and because they were generally singing or whistling, I judged them the most happy of all men. Often I have resolved to sell my cloaths, and buy such as were suitable, and so go into Hampshire and hire myself to a farmer to be a plough-boy; but because I was afraid of being betrayed in my going out of town, and lest I should not learn well to harness the horses, and so provoke the men to curse me, which I knew I could not bear, my designs were stopped: yet never was I free from such intentions hardly a day; for still I proposed going a good way from home into the farthest parts of the nation; or into Wales, and there be content to bear all hardships, which I thought I could bear better if I was where I was not known. I was purposed not to betray my religious mind to any, nor so much as shew my birth or my thoughts to one soul. I intended to read the Bible in secret and to pray, but to forbear to talk of sacred things, lest any should know I could read, and my case should by any means come to light. Such thoughts as these made me so uneasy and disquieted in every place, that I never knew what it was to be in the least contented with whatever I possessed. Yea, I could not be thankful for any temporal blessings, because I thought myself so unsettled, and because no blessing satisfied my craving soul, or made me wish to stay behind on the earth a day. The shining of the sun, the beauty of the spring, the voice of singing, the melody of birds, the shade of trees, or the murmur of waters, afforded me no pleasure. No: all was strange and dark, and gloomy and desolate. All was "vanity and vexation of spirit:" all the earth seemed full of darkness and cruel habitations; nor could meat, drink, or raiment give me any comfort; I wanted only to know if I had any part in the Lord Jesus.

And now a thought sometimes came, "What if I should be saved? It may be the Lord is chastening me for my good." Nay, sometimes I heard a voice as it were saying, "Behold, thou shalt bear my name before

much people; and it shall come to pass that in thy days many shall be added to the Lord." To this I myself answered, "Lord, how can I bear thy name to others, who look every hour to be lost myself? Neither have I learning, nor the understanding of the scriptures." Then would it be strongly impressed upon me, "Fear not, I am with thee, and thou shalt testify of me in every place whither I shall send thee. Lo! I will be a mouth to thee, and thou shalt bear my gospel even in the midst of the streets." But this being then an unheard of thing, I regarded it not, and was soon as heavy as before.

After I had been thus afflicted and grieved near two years, the temptation to think "I should never die, or live to a great age," so prevailed upon me, that instead of asking for mercy, I asked hourly for death: yea, and desired to break into eternity, though at the hazard of falling into hell. My continual prayer was out of Hugo.

"O Lord my God, some kind relief afford,
Grant some kind poison, or some friendly sword:
Thy mercy, death, is all I thee implore,
O grant it soon, lest I blaspheme thy pow'r!"

These thoughts I often cherished by rising at midnight and looking out at the window, contemplating the solemnity of the night, and the profound silence of the morning-watch. If then I heard a dog bark, trembling I answered, "So God accounts of my prayers." If I heard the owl, I thought, "I am also become like an owl in the desert."

When I found any freedom, I read in the scriptures, and used to think the testimony of Christ, in the promises, was doubtless sweet and precious to such as our Saviour loved, but I thought they are nothing to me; I have no part in them." Yea I generally opened upon such places as made most against me, and seemed to read my utter condemnation, so that often I have been afraid to open the testament, lest I should see more threatenings than I had seen already; and sometimes I have thrown down the book spitefully, when I saw no comfort there

there for me, and owned, "What have I to do with thee?" and then in unmeasured grief I have looked toward heaven, and have wondered what I was spared out of hell for. Many times I have looked on the scriptures as very tasteless, insipid, and unpleasant, and thought other books better by far; yet believed there were riches in the word for others who had the Spirit of God to understand it; but to me, all beside the law, and the judgments, and the terrors, were like a book sealed, so that I could not read it, as I thought, to profit by it at all.

I remember at one time every error in doctrine or judgment I heard of, staggered me and made me question if it were not right, and asked often in my mind, "How do I know the Roman Catholics are wrong?" Or, "How do I know if the Jews be not in the right way?" Or, if these are not, for all I know the Quakers may." But yet if any came in my way and disputed these errors, I had always from scripture to gainsay and withstand their arguments: yea I pleaded often for those truths of which I doubted myself, and could not help mightily defending the faith of the church, and of the scripture, though I stood in fear lest both should be but delusion.

In these temptations I was at times for many months; and besides these, I had such as I dare not mention, they are more than many can possibly believe, and the writing of them might stagger many who are weak. "God, thou knowest my simplicity, and my faults are not hid from thee."

As I was yet pressed down with convictions of sin, and the fear of God's wrath, and the dreadful looking for of judgment; pride in apparel and spirit, lust, covetousness, and passion, still most ruled in my captive spirit: against these I strove, by fasting long and often, and prayed kneeling nine times a day; and the week before the communion I spent as much time as possible in works of mortification and self-denial, eating only once a day, (viz.) in the evening; and from Friday break-

fast I ate not till Sunday noon, when I received the bread and wine. Also on some days I lived only upon bread and water; and when I thought that was too good for a christian, I would not eat till the bread was hard and dry, and at last I thought that was too good, and then I boiled and baked potatoes, and eat them; also I eat acorns, leaves of trees, crabs, and grass; and wished often heartily that I could bring myself to live only upon roots and herbs. But when I had done all which was in my power to do, and found no relief, I was convinced salvation was not of works. No alms, or fastings, or prayers, or watchings could cover my naked soul from almighty wrath.' I hated my righteousness, loathed my prayers, and could truly say, I am unprofitable, and my righteousness as filthy rags: yea, and amidst all my words such terror came upon me as made me sweat and quake exceedingly.

Yet in all I suffered I dreaded turning back into the world more than my present affliction; nay, more than the thoughts of hell; and was bent to go forward and perish at the feet of Jesus. Accordingly, for his sake, I now resolved to part with the only friend I had; having heard him openly blaspheme the Lord that bought him, and deny his God: I therefore wholly refrained from his company, and in few days we became strangers to each other. This proved a great trial, but though I was tempted thereto, I durst never heal the breach, or renew my friendship.

When we wholly parted, and I had thrown off all thoughts of being free again, the storm so long gathering fell upon me; the arrows of the almighty so pierced my heart, that I could not tell if I should be out of hell a moment. All the sins that ever I had done were set before me; all my secret acts of uncleanness, my theft, lies, and evil words stared me in the face, and cried continually, "Thou art the man: thou art the soul that hast rejected God, and lo, his wrath abideth upon thee." O the torment I then endured! I hated every body I saw, but especially them of my own house. I was disobedient

cient and without natural affection. I said, "Surely I am a reprobate. God hath loved every man but me."

To this were added trials of all kinds: my employment was to measure land with a gentleman of Reading; and in the harvest, and other times of leisure, I bought things of several sorts, and sold them again retail. But now altogether my business failed, my friends looked cold, and enemies increased; if any one spoke to me, it was like a sword cutting my heart; especially if they spake sharply; all my hope, even in the present life, was taken away. I thought I must starve with hunger here, and be tormented for ever hereafter. Judge, ye that read, what I passed through. My own house behaved as though they knew me not; and all mine acquaintance condemned me; so that I even wished I had never enquired after God, nor heard of the salvation of Jesus.

I envied now more than ever them who were fallen asleep in death; these, I thought, are now at rest. They know sorrow no more, their tears are wiped away, all their travail is at an end. If there were infants or children where I was, I pitied their fate, being born into such a world, and rejoiced when I heard they were dead. Yea, when I beheld the state of insects, birds, beasts, &c. I wished I was half so happy as they, who, after a short life, remain in silence.

Quite forlorn and destitute, finding prayers, and tears, and cries in vain, about the beginning of August 1737, I began to resign myself in the midst of my distress, to the wise disposal of God. I gave up my desires, my will, and remains of hope; being content to go down to hell, as God should please, either in life or death. I found I was willing upon any terms to be saved, but was convinced I deserved hell, and so bowed to the justice of God.

I waited many hours silently upon God; and, if I broke silence, cried unto Jesus to remember his blood, and tears, and sufferings; and if there was room for me in his favour, to reveal it to me. I no more said, Lord, remember how innocent I have lived; nor thanked him

because I was better than another, but pleaded the great oblation and sacrifice of Christ crucified; I intreated mercy for his sake alone; I knew my guilt, and was dumb before my God; often repeating these words of Eli, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good."

I was still bent to go into some solitary place, that I might there find the happiness of waiting on God. Though I had often before been hindered, I resolved to try once more, and fixed for it the 7th day of September, 1737. I paid every one to whom I owed any thing, intending to take a bible and common prayer-book, with Hugo's Emblems, and prayed my journey might be prosperous. As I lay awake on the 6th day, strange heaviness came upon me, and when I arose it continued. My mind was full of fear and trouble, and I was I think more dejected than ever; I purposed notwithstanding to be gone before the next sun rising. While I was sitting and reflecting thereon, the saint-bell rang at St. Lawrence's church for prayers. At first I was careless about going, but considering what the people would say, and what they would think, if I missed church when I was in town; and that it might stagger some, fearing I was negligent or gone back; I concluded in my own breast to go. When I was risen up, I again thought I shall be far enough off about this time to-morrow, and I may as well forbear to go now; it is but once, and there is no good there for me, I may as well keep my place and be content. I sat down again, but was so uneasy that I was obliged to get up and go. I went out like some outcast into a foreign land; my heart was ready to burst; my soul at the brink of hell, above measure disconsolate and heavy. Had any met me, my countenance would have betrayed me, as well as low voice and tears. When I had entered the church, and fallen on my knees, I began murmuring, as I did often, because my cross seemed more heavy than ever was laid on any one beside; and how untroubled all the children of God passed to heaven, and how full of terror I must go down to hell! And I was as if the sword of the Lord was dividing asunder my joints and

and marrow, my soul and spirit; till near the end of the Psalms, when these words were read, "Great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all! And he that putteth his trust in God shall not be destitute: I had just room to think who can be more destitute than I? when I was overwhelmed with joy, and I believed there was mercy. My heart danced for joy, and my dying soul revived! I heard the voice of Jesus, saying, I am thy salvation. I no more groaned under the weight of sin. The fears of hell were taken away, and being sensible that Christ loved me, and died for me, "I rejoiced in God my Saviour."

This joy and peace in believing filled me about three or four hours; and I began to vow everlasting obedience, and how faithfully I would stand for the Lord all the days of my life. "In this my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved; thou, Lord, hast made my hill so strong! But it was not long before he hid his face, and I was troubled." Satan was suffered to buffet me violently, and to suggest, Where is now thy God? How do I know but this is delusion? May it not be the Lord has shewed me this as an aggravation to my torment, when I am cast away! My horrors were so great, that I sweated, prayed, and cried aloud for mercy! And when I saw no help, I drank the cup which my Father had given me; and I said, submitting myself to his righteous will, "If the Lord is pleased to cast me off, I am content; I would willingly sit down with the saints in the kingdom: but God's will be done."

About three days after I was sitting thoughtful in an inner room, and in the multitude of my temptations, I imagined that the dull weather might add to my grief; scarce had I thus thought ere the sun, which had not shone for some time, shined beautifully from the clouds; and the voice of God witnessed at that instant: "Thus shall the Sun of righteousness arise on thee." I believed the promise, and found the love of God again shed abroad in my heart; I saw clearly the will of the Lord

Lord in calling me through much tribulation, and I said gladly, "It is good for me that I have been in trouble."

I felt great and settled peace daily from this time, and whenever I found temptations, I prayed, and knew always that scripture true, "God will hear them speedily, who cry day and night unto him." When I laid me down in bed, I laid as in the everlasting arms; and when I rose in the morning, the Lord was present; and often my lips have been uttering words of prayer, before I well knew whether I was sleeping or waking. Clouds indeed often passed over my mind, yet at times I had so clear communion with Jesus, that I have spent the day, and forgot how the time passed away, and could no more doubt of his presence in my heart, than of the shining of the sun when I beheld him in his strength; God bearing witness often with the promises of the gospel in my spirit, saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" only my bliss was not abiding, I rested not in the full participation of Jesu's love: but as a cordial was it given to my soul when I was weary and cried for rest in my pilgrimage; or, after the tempter was departed from me; or, in the trials which I had from my own family; but all the dissatisfaction or coldness which came from them, only served to wean me more and more from the world, and the things of the world. "O that I may never love father, or mother, or house, or land, more than thee!"

About the latter end of the year 1738 one lent me a part of Mr. Whitefield's journal, to whom I was then a stranger, and much against my will I read it; for I feared to read any books save the Bible and Hugo's Emblems. But when I read the place where he mentions the woman who had been in the pangs of the new-birth, my heart cleaved to him, believing him not unacquainted with that bitter cup, the dregs of which I had long been drinking. I laid down the book, and went straightway into an upper chamber to pray, if by any means God would permit me to come to the knowledge of this man.

man. When I was on my knees I prayed and said, "O Lord Jesus, who knowest well the sorrow of my troubled spirit, who alone canst give me a companion in my way to thee, permit me to be intimate with this thy servant now sent forth to preach thy gospel in other lands: incline him to stoop to hear me, and to speak humbly to me, and so join us together, that together we may be accounted worthy to rest in the kingdom of God for ever." Before I rose up, the Lord answered me; yea, while I was speaking, God shewed me how I should be conversant with him and be beloved by him; verily I believed this, and rejoiced when I thought the day would soon bring it to pass.

Soon after I was invited to a gentlewoman's to supper, where were present her son, and another young gentleman from Oxford. In the evening I was asked to play at cards; I waved it and desired to be excused, being so afraid of snares that I trembled at them. I was still urged, because there was no harm in it; and I as often refused, saying, "I believed at best it was mispending the time." Then the young gentleman answered, "There is just such a stupid religious fellow in Oxford; one Kiuchin, whose brother is of our college, and was once as foolish as he, but is much otherwise now." The news so rejoiced my heart, that from that day I was not at rest till I should see him. My mouth was full of thanksgiving and praises, that I was not left in a wide world alone, but had now the hope of having a companion. This was all the character I had of him, and in the midst of my joy at these tidings I forgot his name; but remembering he had a brother in Trinity College with mine acquaintance, I despaired not of being happy in his company on this side Paradise. With this hope, on a wet Monday, after the morning service at St. Mary's Reading, I began my journey to Oxford: the enemy was not wanting to persuade me to return back, and especially when I was within sight of the city, asking, "What am I going for? To seek an unknown person, not knowing his name nor his college? What would

would the world say, if they knew my errand?" At the brow of the hill, three or four miles on this side, I stood and prayed thus : " O Lord God of Israel, who didst direct the servant of Abraham to find a wife for his master Isaac, when he sought her in a strange country ; direct me, I pray thee, that I may find out this man; and make my way prosperous to thy glory, and let his heart be open to speak kindly to me for thy sake." When I ceased, the tempter departed from me for a season, and I went on my way, through much rain and wind, till I came wet to my skin into St. Clement's in the evening; and there my lodging was so cold and hard, that I was almost in as bad a condition as if I had lain in the street. I rose early, and, feeling the air excessive sharp, could scarce help wishing I had staid at home ; and, indeed, thought of returning without seeking any farther. But while I thought on these things the Lord gave me courage to go on, and in his name I went out to Trinity-College; and, having found my acquaintance, I desired him to mention the names of all the scholars and commoners of his college : " he began, and soon named Kinchin. When I answered, that is the name : he said, he has a brother a Methodist, a fellow of Corpus-Christi-College. I then took my leave of him, and went to see what the Lord would do with me. I soon found the college, but Mr. Kinchin was from home ; yet, considering it might not be long ere he returned, I waited in the cloisters of the College, and in the new buildings, till cold, weary, and hungry. After eight in the evening I returned back to my uncomfortable lodging. In the morning I was again tempted to go home without seeking any farther ; but, considering it was not far out of my way, I yet resolved to try once more. After I had prayed for prosperity, I went on, and, when I came to Mr. Kinchin's room, found him just going out to breakfast. I asked him if his name was Kinchin ; he told me, Yes. I said, Sir, I hear you are despised on the same account with me, and should be glad to speak with you a quarter of an hour. He then spake kindly unto me, and

and having bid me come in, asked me if I would join in prayer with him; I told him, with all my heart; when he prayed to God to bless my coming, and to prepare the words which should be spoken to his own glory. After prayer I talked with him some time, yet afraid to mention my temptations and trials, lest he should think them incredible. • He asked me if I would go to breakfast with him in Bear-lane, to which I consented; and as soon as breakfast was ended, he desired I would stay while he went to visit a sick person, and he would return. I then began to fall into discourse with the woman, at whose house we were, to whom I told much of my experience; after which she related somewhat of her own not unlike mine. She asked me if I told Mr. Kinchin this, and earnestly pressed me to do it. Presently came Mr. Kinchin with two other gownsmen, before whom I spake of the Lord's dealings with me; and also before a little society, who rejoiced greatly, and blessed God that he had thus far directed me.

By this means I got acquainted with many of the Lord's people; among whom were Mr. John and Charles Wesley, Mr. Hutchins, and Mr. Whitefield; in all which I saw the hand of the Lord clearly; especially in my being intimate with the latter, which was after this way. I heard of his being come to London, and because he should not be gone, I set out from Reading in the dusk of the evening and walked all night. I enquired for him at Mr. Hutton's at Temple-bar early in the morning. They told me he would be there at eight of the clock, and about that time I met my dear brother, and fell on his neck and kissed him. I stayed with him several days, and our communion was sweet continually. When I purposed returning, I told him I had a mind to visit the brethren at Bristol. He told me, Mr. John Wesley was going to build a school in Kingswood, for the use of the colliers' children, and asked if I was willing to be one of the masters there. The thing seemed to be of God, and I was obedient; and, having took my leave of him, I came to Reading, which lay in my road

road to Bristol. On Whit-Monday, June 11, 1739, I set out from thence on foot with one of the brethren of London, and though we were stayed by the rains and the bad roads, yet we reached to Sandy-lane the first night; the people of the place were in bed before we came; the inns as well as private houses refusing us room, we lay down in an old stable in a yard. The cold wind which blew all night, and our want of victuals, made us go forward early to the next place, and about the close of Tuesday we got safe into Bristol.

The brethren received us as became christians; and, after the society was ended at Baldwin-street, with several others we went to Mr. Wesley's chamber, who was that morning gone from London, being sent for in haste. I here spent my time, having every thing provided for me by those whom he had desired to receive me as his own self, till Thursday, as far as I had power, in waiting upon God. When I was asked by some to go to Kingswood, to hear a young man read a sermon to the colliers, I readily consented, having been desirous to see the people of that place of a long time. "

When we were come to the place, which was under a sycamore-tree near the intended school, we waited some time among the colliers, who were seriously attending round the tree, in number about four or five hundred, till the young man should come. But while he delayed beyond the appointed time, a gentlewoman of St. Philip's Plain, and a young man who came with us, desired me to read a sermon or expound a chapter. I had no power to refuse or gainsay; and, though I was naturally fearful of speaking before company, having never done such a thing as this, yet so much was I pressed in spirit to testify the salvation of Jesus to the people, that I fell on my knees and besought the Lord to be with me in the work, and prevent me if his Majesty was offended.

Scarce had we ended prayer, when the young man came who was to read; and, though he was urged to begin by many friends, yet he could not consent, but intreated

treated me, if I was inclined, to expound. Yet, after all this, I was afraid, lest the Lord should not teach me what to say. Again I prayed; and, finding great freedom, I then tarried no longer, but rose up and went to the congregation, the Lord bearing witness with my word, insomuch that many believed in that hour.

On Friday I again expounded part of St. James's epistle at White-Hall, about a mile distant from the school, where many behaved in the most devout way I ever had seen. Tears fell from many eyes. And when we had joined in singing an hymn we parted, and were brought on our way home by several of the colliers.

On Sunday, June 17, I expounded again, under the sycamore-tree, the first chapter of St. John's gospel, and in the afternoon I discoursed to about four thousand on the day of judgment from the thirteenth of St. Mark. Here also the power of God was present, and his word did not fall to the ground.

Thus I continued expounding and preaching to the colliers and to their children, and sometimes in the societies in Bristol, especially at one in Nicholas-street, till Mr. Wesley returned from London, who, although he was desired by many to forbid me, rather encouraged me, and often took sweet counsel together with me as friends. This part of my life, through the joy I found in my first love, and the union which was among the brethren, seemed to be the most happy of all, while the flourishing state of the societies seemed to presage some glorious days at hand, in which I thought I should see greater things than these.

After some time Mr. Charles Wesley came into Bristol, and then I went to live altogether at Kingswood among the colliers, and scarce ever came to Bristol, unless to supply Mr. Wesley's place there while he went to London or into any other town to preach. While I preached constantly at Kingswood in the year of our Saviour 1739, and in the year 1740, we enjoyed sweet peace, and had many remarkable meetings at the school, at Kendleshire, Syson, Bridget, Hambrook, Tockington,

Elverton, Westerleigh, also at Hanham, and on the Causey. At some of these places God hath often appeared wonderful, both in shedding abroad his love in the hearts of the people by the Holy Ghost, and also in awakening souls, and calling them to seek him. Neither do I remember any time in those days when God was not pleased to bless our assemblies abundantly.

About Christmas 1740, a difference in doctrines broke out between Messrs. Wesley and me; they believed and taught many things which I thought were not according to the gospel, neither to mine own experience; and in a very little time, while I was preaching in several parts of Wiltshire, Mr. John Wesley took the entire possession of Kingswood school, and I was forbid to preach there any more, neither from that time did I. And not long after, when I and some of the colliers had met apart to consider on these things, and to lay them before the Lord, the rest of the society, who held Mr. Wesley's doctrines, were so offended, that they would not let Mr. Wesley rest till he openly put me, and those few who believed my word, out of the society, though, I believe, against his will.

When we were separated, we were in number twelve men and twelve women; and, having a house just by where we had the liberty to meet, we sat down and wept and cried to the Lord, because we believed a breach was made that day in Israel. Here we afterward enjoyed many sweet and precious seasons of divine power. Our Saviour often was pleased to be present with us, and in a short time so increased our company that we were about one hundred and twenty; and in these days many villages in Wiltshire received the word gladly, such as Castle-Comb, Foxham, Clack, Lineham, Brinkworth, Dancy, Sutton, Segery, Soummerford, &c. where the differences never once were known till Mr. Whitefield came from America and joined the brethren and with me; neither, after they knew it, did it make any stir in all that country; so graciously did our Saviour deal by them and by me.

Not long after Mr. Whitefield came into England, a Tabernacle was built to preach in near Moorfields; and, while he went into the country, I went first to London to preach, and began to find favour in the eyes of the people more and more; at which time Mr. Harris and Mr. Humphreys openly joined with us, as did a little before Mr. Adams, of Hampton in Gloucestershire. All these were preachers. In so little a time, "how hath the Lord gathered and increased his people! O my God, let me never forget what thou hast done for me, and how thou hast had compassion upon me, and from many troubles hast at last brought me out into a wealthy place."

On the fourteenth day of June, 1739, the burden of the Lord came upon me, and I began to open my mouth to testify of Jesus Christ, and, according to his word, he has been with me, and become a mouth to me; and, through his abundant love, has kept me from all doubts, and fears, and murmurings, touching my faith in the blood of the Lamb, and my good hope in him, and in a settled peace passing all understanding. I now wait till the Lord Jesus, my master, shall call me from his vineyard to set down in his everlasting sabbath. And of this I am well persuaded, that when I have done the work for which I am sent, I shall be no more a stranger upon the earth, but shall be caught up to Abraham's bosom, and be a fellow-citizen with the saints in the kingdom of my Father, and in the land of Canaan, and in the New Jerusalem shall I reign for ever and ever!

HERE Mr. CENNICK'S account of himself closes. He was then in the two and twentieth year of his age. Brought from the greatest distress of soul, to enjoy a sweet serenity and peace which passed all understanding. The singular manner in which he was led into the knowledge of Christ, and the deep sense he retained of his own corrupt nature, together with the insight he had received into the blessed gospel, imposed upon him a

faith contrary to the doctrine of free-will, and sinless perfection, which Mr. Wesley had imbibed. It could not be supposed that persons whose sentiments were so opposite could long act in unison. Mr. Wesley, having secured the places of worship to himself, refused any longer to admit him into the pulpits. At this rent he was deeply affected, but not discouraged from prosecuting the great objects of the gospel, to which he had devoted himself. Nay, he laboured more abundantly than ever, and waxed bold to declare to all wherever providence directed his steps, the unsearchable riches of his redeeming Lord and Saviour.

While he was at Kingswood, he published his first volume of Hymns. Though he had not the advantage of what is called a learned education, yet the native strength of his genius was such, that very good judges of poetry have attributed merit to many of them, and some of them are in constant use in most of the collections of the present day.

In March 1741, about three months after this breach, Mr. Whitefield returned from America, and shared a fate similar to Mr. Cennick, which, under his then existing circumstances, inflicted a deep wound upon his affectionate and tender heart. His spiritual children refused to hear him, and even put their fingers in their ears as they passed by him, while preaching out of doors. God, however, soon gave him another congregation, and new friends. For these he immediately began to build a temporary but large wooden house, which he called a Tabernacle. Not two months after his arrival, he wrote Mr. Cennick to invite him to a personal interview, and co-operation in the cause of their common Lord. "Hasten hither, my very dear brother, with all speed; and then we shall see what God intends to do for us and by us. It is a trying time now in the church. The Lord give us a due mixture of the lamb and the lion. Some that have been led astray begin to recover, the Lord make way for his own truths. My love to the colliers,

colliers, and all friends. Many, I suppose, will be shy. I am become a monster to several, who were even wrought upon under my ministry; but it must needs be that offences should come; otherwise how should I learn to cease from man? Adieu—hasten, and speak face to face.”

Mr. Cennick, on coming to town, presently engaged the hearts of the people, and became one of the most popular and useful preachers in Mr. Whitefield's connexion. Nor was it to the Tabernacle his labours or success were confined. Many places in Gloucestershire, in the west of England, and particularly in North Wiltshire, by his instrumentality received the word, with all gladness. His labours now became excessive, preaching some days six times. Success kept pace with his efforts, and persecutions with his success. To Mr. Whitefield he writes, “I have not wrote so often as I could wish since you came to London; because the Lord for many days has humbled me under a deep sense of my vile nature, and unworthiness to write to one who is carried aloft in the arms of God.”

“I think the Lamb of God has greatly blessed me in these counties, especially since my last coming; and lest I should be exalted above measure, he gives me to see myself without him, vile and baser than the vilest in the streets. I must bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned; yea, I am content to bear it of my God!”

“Last Tuesday, at Longley, several persons came casting great stones at the windows where we worshipped, and hallooed to each other to disturb us with their noise; but the Lord gave the people sweetly to attend to the word and prayer. They then blamed each other for not dragging me out of the pulpit, and pulling the house to pieces. At last they laboured very hard in gathering up dirt and filth, which they continued to throw at us till we finished. Not content with this, they laid wait for us in the fields and lanes, and pelted us as we passed on our way. One *Tuck*, of that place,

and others, pretending to be friends, joined some of the society, and, as they walked along with them, cut their clothes with scissars, using them otherwise unhand-somely; and endeavouring to push them into the ditches and brooks. How many ways does the devil invent to worry the lambs of the Lord Jesus, and yet he labours in vain, for they are in our Saviour's hands."

"On Sunday, about two o'clock in the afternoon, after the society at Brinkworth was dismissed, I preached at the new house at Tetherton. Though many threatened us, if we came there; yet the Lord held them, so that we enjoyed peace all the time. I believe near a thousand came to hear; great part of them were strangers. O may the Lord give them to be *fellow citizens with us, of the Jerusalem which is free.*"

"The persecutions in these villages seem to increase in proportion as the work goes on. The ministers and parish officers threaten to famish the poor *Cennickers*. Their threats have prevailed with some; while others tell them, *If you starve us we will go, and rather than we will forbear, we will eat grass with the kine.* I admire the kindness of our Saviour, who permits none to hinder our meeting."

In another letter to Mr. W. he proceeds, "Out of the fulness of my heart I write, that you may rejoice with me in the going forth of the presence of the Lord Jesus among us in this country. I was much bowed down before him in Bristol; and our Saviour knows how blindfolded I walked before him in all places. When I came to Tetherton, the angel of his presence again went before me, as at other times; and it was then I saw why he had hid away his face. How good is the Lord Jesus, who always, when he turns his people to destruction, says, *Return again ye children of men!* On Sunday morning the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me in a most refreshing manner all the while I was preaching on his Son's blood. I do not know the day when I felt more the merit of it in my heart, speaking peace. After I had done, I set out for *Roud*, a place a little on this side Devizes.

Devizes. About fourscore of the people of God went with me on horseback, beside those who went on foot. I found all the way I went the Lord had gone out before his children, and those words were uncommonly sweet to me, *chariots of fire, and horses of fire*. I was sure these were round about us.

“ Every town and village through which we passed, was lined with inhabitants who beheld us, terrible as an army with banners. The Lord was much in the barn where I preached; there were few dry eyes among the strangers, who, after I had done, intreated me to come again, and also into Devizes. I believe the Lord is opening an effectual door here. In the afternoon I went to Corsham, a town on the Bath road, and there in a field I preached to some thousands. Here the Saviour laid power on the word; so that many appeared affected and wept, and desired me to come there again, and to other places round. With about a hundred on horseback, I returned to Tetherton with a sweet disposition of mind, full of joy, that the Lord should own unworthy me, and send me to gather in his elect.”

At Exeter, he felt the usual enmity of the world against the word which he preached, and exposed his own life and blood over and over to the insults of those, who could blindly despise the precious and powerful doctrine of salvation by the blood of his Redeemer. Zeal for the name of his Lord, and bowels of tenderness towards poor souls, with a desire of rescuing them from spiritual thraldom and misery, through faith in the atonement, the just motive of a gospel preacher, alone and strongly actuated him, and would not suffer his tongue to be silent. That this topic was indeed every where his grand subject, and gave his manner of preaching its distinguishing character, may be gathered from his hymns and sermons, and epistolary correspondence. Multitudes who heard him set forth the bitter pains and sufferings of the Lamb of God on their behalf, and the readiness of that once wounded heart, to receive them, sinners as they were, felt a power which melted them
into

into a willingness to take his yoke, and become his humble followers.

Mr. C. appears to have received favourable impressions towards the Moravian brethren shortly after his union with Mr. Whitefield, to whom, in a letter dated May 1, 1742, he says " I love brother Spangleberg dearly; my heart is with his heart, in the Lord Jesus. I thank my Saviour, I have been a means of removing many strange aspersions and slanders against that people, and ministers in particular. At first, I thought not to take much notice of what I heard against them, as spoken by brother Spangleberg; but, indeed, I was constrained to speak my conscience, and defend them to the uttermost. This our Saviour knows I have done with weakness and simplicity, according to my knowledge, and what I have seen. As to the Kingswood society, it is the most like theirs of any we have, and much after their way."

After a defence of this kind, it is easy to conceive, that, drinking into the same spirit, he might be well disposed towards their peculiarities, and induced to form with them a still closer alliance: accordingly, in the year 1745, he openly avowed his attachment: and being openly opposed by Mr. Adams, his colleague at the Tabernacle, in the sentiments he advanced, a separation ensued, and he went over to the Brethren. Mr. Whitefield was recently gone to America; and on his arrival immediately wrote to him in strains of usual affection and familiarity. Little did he think of the rent that was made in his societies by this circumstance: The propensities of the people in town and country turned towards Mr. Cennick's manner, and no sooner did he declare his intention of joining the United Brethren, than the Tabernacle was shaken to the foundation. A multitude went off with him, and those who remained, not approving his change, wept at his departure, for he was greatly beloved by all. Though Mr. Whitefield felt this shock most severely, yet a friendly and affectionate correspondence and intercourse continued between

tween him and Mr. Cennick, till the death of the latter.

Whoever understands the nature of religious communications, knows that by passing out of one society into another, a man does not always reflect disparagement or censure upon his former connexion; he may be convinced that the other will, upon the whole, better suit his views and feelings as an individual.

The same year he chose to take a tour into Germany, to see some of the congregations there. He himself was desirous of a short interval of rest; but the Brethren knowing he was born and called for the good of mankind, would not keep him too long, but resigned him again to his former labours. So coming back to England, the first work he entered upon was to preach in Dublin, according to an invitation he had received: this he did in the beginning of 1746, with his usual alacrity and success. The flock and chapel he had formerly been concerned with in Wiltshire, he committed to the Brethren's care, that they might prosecute what he had begun amongst them.

Towards the latter end of this year, he went a second time to Germany. This time he was solemnly received as a member of the Brethren's congregation. After this, he made a considerable stay there, and in June, the following year, was married to a lady, whose maiden name was Jane Bryant, of Clack, in Wiltshire; by her he had three children, two of whom, and his wife, survived him.

Soon after this marriage he undertook the most extensive labour in his Lord's vineyard, that he was supposed by some of his friends ever to be employed in; it was in the north of Ireland. In this poor country he underwent many fatigues, and endured evils destructive to his bodily health, with great cheerfulness, yea eagerness of mind, counting it reward enough to win souls to Christ. And he did win not only some, but a great many. The number of his constant hearers during the several years that he preached there, almost surpasses credit; a good
part

part of whom were formed, according to his earnest wish, into the order and state of congregations in the Brethren's way. In the year 1749, to enable him regularly to baptize such children in that country, as plainly belonged to his and no other fold, he was ordained deacon of the Brethren's church at London.

While he was engaged in Ireland, he came over now and then to London, though he could never be spared long. He also made an excursion to Pembrokeshire, in South Wales. He had thoughts likewise of going to other places, particularly America: for the Brethren knowing him to be an extraordinary instrument, left such things always to his own impulse and determination, nor was he confined to place, time, and circumstances, like others of a more limited gift and vocation.

His last labour, but inferior to none in blessing and energy, was in Dublin. He came thither from the north, upon occasion of the Brethren's new chapel being built there, which he had long wished for, and opened it with a discourse on, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," and continued preaching in it till his journey to London, to large crouds of people, so that there was a new awakening in the whole place. He also kept almost all the congregational meetings.

Now let the reader look back on his words wherewith he concluded the forementioned account of his first years. "I now wait till my dear Lord shall call me from his vineyard, to sit down in his everlasting sabbath; and of this I am well persuaded, that when I have done the work for which I am sent, I shall no more be a stranger upon the earth; but shall ascend to dwell in my Saviour's bosom, and in the kingdom of my Father, for ever and ever. Amen."

Though he was not forward in publishing, yet not long before his death, as if aware that his vocal ministry would shortly be at an end, he consented to the printing of two volumes of his sermons.

But there is one side more to be considered in a man, and that the most important of all, how his very heart and

and spirit stands towards his God and Saviour ! Mr. Cennick did not act a part, nor put on a zeal in publick, which he did not also follow, yea, and feel in private. He loved to converse alone, and familiarly with his faithful Redeemer; he would often go into the fields, redeem the time, and steal some intervals of solitude. No hungry man could long more for his meal-time, than he did for opportunities to pour out his soul before his Beloved, and none after it could be so refreshed and strengthened.

Tender he was, and extremely pathetic both in meditation, and speaking on this head. In the mean time, he had very strict and solid principles about the Christian walk, as is indeed always the case in an unfeigned religion of the heart, where a person has been once truly melted down at the foot of Christ's cross. Evangelical as he was, and far from being a legal brother, yet he knew that the dying love of our God binds us more than any thing else to holiness of life. These are his expressions on the subject. (Take the hymns, because they are the readiest, and nothing shews the man better.)

I want, as faithful Christians do,
To walk, and live to thee ;
And by my conversation shew,
That thou hast died for me.

I want so circumspect to live,
So free from ev'ry sin,
That ev'n the worldly may perceive,
That I with thee have been.

O grant me through thy precious blood,
Thy gospel thus t' adorn :

I ask no more, my Lord, my God,
Till I to thee return.

[Part I.

Previous to his death he intended to go from Dublin, once more, to South Wales, and the friends were in full expectation of seeing him. He had promised by letter, a little while before, that he would shortly steer his

his course thither, and engaged to send word to the Brethren in London as soon as he got there, and that from thence after some stay he would visit London. On Saturday noon, the 28th of June, 1755, at Fetter-lane they were talking at table about it, and wondered that they heard nothing of his arrival in Wales: that same minute one stepped up, and told them that Brother Cennick was come into the house, and was very ill. They went down to him, and he said, "I am extremely sick and feverish, and I think my senses fail me a little; I have scarce eat, drank, or slept since I landed: I have had much ado to sit the horse: these five days were very long ones; how thankful am I, that I am got hither at last!" His flesh burnt like a coal, they put him to bed, and from first to last used their best endeavours to restore him. When asked, what he thought had brought the fever upon him? he said, he had caught some cold on board the ship. Being asked why he did not stop, and favour himself as soon as he found himself sick? "I did not choose," replied he, "to lie down in a strange place; I wanted to reach home first."

When the nature of fevers is considered, especially in the brain, no one will wonder that so little was said during this short and violent illness. It would have been agreeable to record many dying expressions from such a mouth as his. To himself this circumstance could neither add, nor diminish any thing; for he, once for all, enjoyed the peace and love of his Redeemer. There were not wanting, in the intervals of reason, very pertinent expressions; yet these intervals were momentary.

In the course of his illness, one of his attendants told him, that possibly he might at this time leave the body and go home to the Saviour. To which he answered, with full presence of mind, "I shall be very glad to go?" Upon his being reminded, that he, through grace, was one of those who had believed in a crucified Saviour; had preached him in the world; and was no stranger to him; he would have replied in the words of that verse, "Yes! their last look serene and clear, shall witness

witness they believers were;" but was able to say no more than, *their last look*, and then his tongue faltered. He was heard also to sing a verse pretty loud, and several times to cry out very affectionately, "Dear Saviour! dear Saviour! give me patience," and the like.

Friday, July 4, in the afternoon, his eyes became fixed, his countenance serene and composed, his breathing underwent the changes incident to persons expiring, and about seven o'clock he quietly breathed his soul into the arms of Jesus.

Mr. Cennick was rather below the middle stature, of a fair countenance, but of a fairer mind. A good understanding, an open temper, and tender heart characterized the man. His christian qualities were not less distinguishable. If unaffected humility, deadness to the world, a life of communion with God, and a cheerful reliance on a Crucified Saviour constitute the real christian, he was one in an eminent degree. Nor were the evidences of his call to the ministry less striking. Few ministers have felt a warmer love to Jesus Christ; few were more unwearied in preaching his gospel; few triumphed more in his cross, or suffered more patiently in his cause. As to success in his labours, perhaps there was not one, in his day, except Mr. Whitefield, more highly honoured in this particular. 'Tis true, his language was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom; yet his doctrine and address were powerful, and found access to the hearts of thousands. The gospel he so diligently and faithfully dispensed, was the food of his own soul. He drank deeply of the cup of religious pleasures. His altar was not to an unknown God; he exalted not a Saviour whose virtues he had never proved; he pointed not to a Spirit, under whose almighty influence he had not lived; he directed not to a heaven, the happiness of which he had not anticipated. His career was short; but if life may be estimated by the comparative quantity of good produced in it, then this truly active, spiritual, and useful man may be said to have lived to a good old age.



Life of Mr. John Cennick.

Where, on this side heaven, can a more enviable person be found, than he whose mind is thus furnished; whose soul is thus enriched; whose lips thus drop sweetness; whose life is thus devoted; whose services are thus crowned, and whose death is thus blessed? He may not have moved in the circles of the great, he may not have ranked with characters of literary fame; he may not have been able to trace his pedigree through families of noble blood; he may not have soared on the wings of philosophic pursuits; but he has pierced the clouds; he has explored the celestial region; he has presented its delicious fruits, and invited us to arise and possess the land. "O my soul, come thou into his secret, unto his assembly mine honour be thou united!"

The following Verses were found in his pocket-book, with this inscription over them:

Nunc dimittis.

Now, Lord, in peace with Thee and all below,
Let me depart, and to thy kingdom go.
As, earnestly, (fatigued in journeys) I
Have wish'd to see my town to lodge in, nigh:
So earnestly my weeping eyes I turn
Towards thy House, and languish, pine, and mourn.
Nor can I help it, for within I feel
A thirst to see Thee, quite insatiable.
'Tis true, thy blessings make my cup run o'er,
I find thy favours daily more and more;
When troubles me afflict, and bow me down,
I never am forsaken or alone;
Thou kissest all my tears and griefs away,
Art with me all night long, and all the day:
I have no doubt that I belong to Thee,
And shall be with Thee to eternity.
This firm my heart believes, as thou art true;
I am thy pleasant child, thy son, I know.

But

But take it not amiss, O be not griev'd,
I want from pilgrimage to be reliev'd ;
I want to be dissolv'd, and no more here
A wand'rer be, a banish'd foreigner :
Sign my dismissal, with a tender sense
That Thou with my retiring dost dispense.
I would not Thee offend, (Thou know'st my heart)
Nor one short day before thy time depart :
But I am weary and dejected too,
O let me to eternal Sabbath go.
In no chastisement, darkness, or distress,
In no confusion, but in inward peace,
With thy full leave and approbation, I
Intreat to lay my staff and sandals by.
No sudden stroke, or vi'lent fever give,
Which may me of my senses quite bereave,
Lest I should with my lips offend or err,
Or grieve such tender Brethren who are near*
No, let my fleeting soul and my last word
Confirm my assurance, and exalt my Lord.
Allow me this, and sign my glad release,
Let my heart hear Thee say, Depart in peace.
I long to see Thee, Son of Man, and be
A pardon'd part of thy dear family.
As oft at sea, when wind and tide were fair,
I've seen the less'ning mountains disappear ;
Exceeding sick, yet glad to move so fast,
In hopes ere long on th' other side to rest ;
Till the glad sailors spy their native shore,
And the land-breezes my lost strength restore ;
Then on the deck how pleased have I seen
My port, and thought, (as if on shore I'd been)
I see my friends ! I kiss them, and partake
Their welcomes with their arms about my neck !
Till all is realiz'd, and on the strand
Cheerful and thankful, lo ! they see me land ;

* This wish of his was heard ; for though his distemper was really of the kind that he deprecated, yet he was not quite bereft of his senses, much less did his lips utter any thing offensive.

Then I my sickness and fatigues forget,
 And what I fancy'd is real and compleat :
 Just so I long my passport to receive,
 And have permission this sad world to leave.
 Like some poor wind-bound passenger, I wait ;
 He thirsts for home, nor food nor sleep is sweet :
 So I with love-sick anguish, tears and sighs,
 Oft (my heart melting) look towards the skies.
 No words express the throbbings of my breast,
 To fly away, and ever be at rest.
 If I am by, when one in faith expires,
 Or hear their happy exit, it inspires
 My eager soul their footsteps to pursue,
 And fain that night would make my exit too.
 I scarce reflect they now are with the Lamb,
 But down my cheeks the salty riv'lets stream.
 I long to kiss that hand which once me bless'd ;
 Those feet, that travell'd to procure my rest ;
 Those lips, that me confess'd ; and that dear head,
 That bow'd when on it all my sins were laid.
 O Lamb ! I languish till that day I see,
 When Thou wilt say, come up, and be with me.
 Now twice seven years have I thy servant been,
 Now let me end my service, and my sin,
 Forgive all my mistakes, and faults, and shame,
 Neglect, and all things where I've been to blame.
 Let the same kiss my absolution seal,
 A power convey all what is bruised to heal.
 Then loose the silver cord with gentle pain,
 Whilst I on thy dear bosom smiling lean.
 Let the death-sweat, and sick and fainty chills,
 (With chearing views of the eternal hills)
 And limbs grown cold, and breaking eye-strings, tell,
 " But a few moments, and thou shalt be well !"
 Thine everlasting arms be underneath,
 Thy bleeding wounds disarm the tyrant death :
 Thy own cold sweat my clam and sweat wipe off,
 Thy cross my bed and pillow then make soft.

Thy

Thy Ministers of flaming fire attend,
And sing me sweetly to my journey's end.
Them let me hear, then bid my friends adieu,
Say to thine honour—"Thou art good and true :
" I've overcome ! I live for evermore !
" My sorrows now, and pains and tears are o'er.
" The angels wait—the Saviour calls—farewell
" I go with him in endless peace to dwell."
Then let my breath grow short, my strength decay,
The rattles low, and pulses die away.
So fall asleep,—and soaring stoop and view
The less'ning world now left and all below.
Meanwhile shall I awake in Jesu's arms,
Above the reach of slanders, wrongs, or harms,
And with my dear acquaintance gone before,
Stay with the Lamb, and go from him no more !

*The first part of Mr. Cennick's Life turned into
verse, by himself.*

WELL may I say, my life hath been
One scene of sorrow and of sin :
From early days I griefs have known,
And, as I grew, my griefs have grown.

Dangers were always in my path,
And fears of death, and endless wrath :
While pale dejection in me reign'd,
I often wept, by grief constrain'd.

When parted from my company,
Or when I laid my pleasures by,
How hath uncommon dread prevail'd !
And sighs no more would be conceal'd.

I often to divert me strove,
And try'd my troubles to remove :
I sung, and utter'd sighs between ;
Assay'd to stifle guilt with sin.

But oh ! not all that I could do
Would stop the current of my woe ;
Convictions still my vileness shew'd !
How great my guilt ! how gone from God !

Prevented that I could not die,
Nor might to one kind refuge fly ;
Just like the orphan did I mourn ;
Forsook by all, and left forlorn.

Though every day I wail'd my fall,
Three years of grief exceeded all !
No rest I knew ! a slave to sin !
With scarce a spark of hope between !

From ev'ry mortal eyelid veil'd,
My heart I kept, my grief conceal'd ;
Till eighteen tedious years were o'er,
In secret all my cross I bore.

To none but the omniscient eye
Would I unlock my misery :
Nor even to my friends impart,
The close distemper of my heart.

The world beheld my cheerful mien,
Nor guess'd my woe, to all unseen,
They by appearance judg'd ; nor knew
The troubles that I waded through.

Lust, anger, blasphemy, and pride,
With legions of such ills beside,
Troubled my thoughts ; while doubts and fears,
Clouded and darken'd all my years.

Quite tir'd at last, I sat me down
Some distance from my native town,
Yet within sight ; near where the Thames
Glides silent by in fruitful streams.

Sighs now no more would be confin'd,
They breath'd the trouble of my mind :
I wish'd for death ! and check'd the word,
And pray'd despairing for the Lord !

Unhappy

Unhappy more than all on earth,
I thought the place that gave me birth :
Sadness and strangest thoughts me fill'd,
As I its ragged* walls beheld.

Much like the buildings I appear'd ;
Greatly demolish'd, yet 'twas spar'd :
One for its ancient worth and fame,
But O ! my ancient boast was shame.

Why I was spar'd, so nigh to hell !
God only knew ! I could not tell :
But thought—such as is yonder wall,
I stand decaying since the fall.

Should that be razed to the ground,
Its happy end would there be found ;
But I, when driven hence, must be
Condemn'd to all eternity.

Close by the hill, my seat, there stood
The ruins of a noted wood ;
Among whose trees, beneath whose shade,
The birds their habitation made.

While I was musing, nigh despair,
They sung—and I awhile gave ear ;
Reflecting 'midst their harmony,
How blest is ev'ry one but me !

No care of future life or woe,
Nor grief, nor sin, they ever know :
When death declares their destiny,
In silence they shall ever lie.

Thus all things added to my pain,
And still compell'd me to complain :
Till sable clouds began to rise,
And gather in the Eastern skies.

Call'd now to bid the fields adieu,
I rose oppress'd and heavy too :
Wishes for rest employ'd my tongue.
But O ! my journey yet was long.

* The Abbey walls.

Home to my house unhelp'd I went,
Bewailing still my banishment :
The house, alas ! no rest could yield,
Still comfortless as was the field.

Weary with travail, yet unknown,
To all but God and me alone :
Yet nine long months for peace I strove,
A stranger still to ease and love.

Harden'd in grief, inur'd to woe,
Train'd up in fears and perils too :
I said, it ever thus must be,
No quiet is permitted me.

Hard hap ! and more than heavy lot,
Estrang'd from peace, by God forgot :
That I must bear, by heav'n consign'd,
The terrors of a troubled mind.

Strivings and wrestlings found I vain,
Nothing I did could stay my pain :
Then gave I up my works and will,
Resign'd to share in heaven or hell.

Like some poor pris'ner at the bar !
Conscious of guilt, of sin and fear ;
Arraign'd, and self-condemn'd I stood,
Lost in the world, and in my blood !

Yet here midst blackest clouds confin'd,
A beam from Christ the day star shin'd :
Surely, thought I, if Jesus please,
He freely can restore me peace.

He dy'd for sinners ! I am one !
May be he did for me atone :
Though I am nothing else but sin,
He, if he will, can make me clean !

Thus light came in, and I believ'd !
Myself forgot, and help receiv'd !
My Saviour then I know I found !
And, press'd by guilt, no more I groan'd.

O happy

O happy hour ! in which I ceas'd,
From man ; for then I found a rest !
No longer was my Lord unknown !
Thy light, O Jesus in me shone !

I ign'rant of thy righteousness,
Set up my labours in its place !
Forgot for why thy blood was shed,
And pray'd, and fasted in its stead.

Bless'd be thy name, for now I know,
I and my works can nothing do :
The Lord alone can ransom man,
For this the spotless Lamb was slain.

When sacrifices, works and pray'r,
Prov'd vain, and ineffectual were,
" Lo ! then I come," the Saviour cry'd,
And bleeding bow'd his head, and dy'd !

He dy'd for all who ever saw
No help in them, nor by the law :
I this have seen ; and glad I own,
" Salvation is by Christ alone !"

DISCOURSE I.

THE CRIES OF THE SON OF GOD.

MARK XV. 37.

Jesus cried with a loud Voice, and gave up the Ghost.

ALL the sufferings, troubles, and afflictions of our Saviour's life, served to make him an experienced Physician and Priest of his people; and to this end he underwent all pains and sorrows, and waded through all the heaviest oppressions and temptations, that he might feel how near they touch a weak soul, how deep they pierce and wound, and how bitter and sad they make every human creature's life. To prove this truly, it became necessary that the Lord Jesus should be lower than the angels, and take on him a nature inferior to theirs, that being made capable of suffering death, and of enduring all afflictions, he might be a suitable Person for all in distress to apply to, and who, from a feeling of their infirmities, might pity them when they were tempted.

So long then the Redeemer lived in his low incarnate state in the world, till from the infant to the state of manhood he had passed through and felt all misery, sickness, pain and temptation. He well knew what poverty was, and learned dearly what it is to be weak, a stranger in a land, an exile; to be friendless, an orphan, hated, slandered, and, above all,

all, the mark and butt of all the envy and spleen of the evil spirits. He above all others, by way of eminence, deserved that character, "A man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs. He was smitten and afflicted of God." Satan made war with him. His own people received him not. We hid our faces from him. He was the scorn of men and the outcast of the people. But, as I hinted before, this qualified the Son of man to be a suitable Person for his high place in the church of God, and for the office with which he was now invested, namely, to be the Saviour of the lost world, the Physician of his sick and distempered people, and the Healer of the nations; for now the poorest and most wretched object can approach to him with hope. And with all propriety use that old but sweet and expressive prayer, "Have mercy upon me, thou Son of David!" thou Son of man! thou afflicted and tempted Jesus! who knows, by long and bitter experience, what a sad state I am in; help me, and save me out of it.

But though our dear Saviour's whole life-time was one scene of hardships, troubles and grief, it seemed as if the most heavy part remained till last; and as his life drew near to an end, the bitterest dregs of the cup of the Lord's right-hand were reserved to be poured out upon him in body and soul, and this extorted from him the strong cries and tears which shall be the subject of our present meditation.

And first, it would not be amiss to observe how silent the Lamb behaved during his troublesome warfare, till he came to die. Very little is said of him till he was driven out into the wilderness to be tempted; he seemed to have chosen to eat his bread of affliction in secret, and as "a sparrow he sat alone, and mourned like a dove in the wilderness,"
when

when "he mingled his drink with weeping," and when "in the day-time and in the night-season his soul had no rest."

The miseries of the short space of his ministry are mentioned in some measure in the gospel; but it is remarkable, no ingratitude shewn him, no shame, blasphemies of the multitude, fears or blows, made him complain. No, he bore all with a divine and inimitable patience; and even when Herod and his guards set him at nought, and his reverend head was buffeted and beaten through the hall, and his innocent face covered with shame and spittle, his hair and beard torn off, and he mocked and derided in the most barbarous manner, it did not force from him a word. Nothing betrayed in him a sorrow that he had undertaken the work; no expression or look shewed he repented, or that he wanted to be released out of such cruel hands. "He was as a deaf man, and as one in whose mouth are no reproofs," when "false witnesses laid to his charge things that he knew not;" nor could the menaces and threatenings of his judges, the rage of the priests, nor false charge of the people, make him break his lamb-like silence. Who can tell what he sustained when they stripped and scourged him? Who knows, or can think, what he felt when they put the crown of thorns on his head, and laid on him with their hands and with staves? Or who can form an idea of the smart and anguish he bore when the cross was laid upon his sore and raw back, and he was led out like a robber to die? But could a man be able to guess at his bodily pain, yet who in heaven or earth can judge what his righteous soul felt from the wrath above, and from hell beneath? Let him feel what he would, and bear all men and devils could lay upon him, he held his peace, and answered not a word. Inward sighs, tears, and drops

4 *The Cries of the Son of God.*

of sweat and blood innumerable flowed from him, but "he did not lift up his voice, nor was his cry heard in the streets."

"O come hither, ye daughters of Jerusalem, and see the King with the crown wherewith he was crowned in the day of his espousals! Behold how glorious the King of Israel looked," in the day when he went out of the gate of Jerusalem "dumb as a sheep before his shearers, and as a lamb led to the slaughter." He answered not before the judges, because he knew we were guilty: He complained not, or dropped the least murmuring word, that we might see how willingly and contentedly he suffered all our chastisement, and did not think the sharpest grief or most cruel stroke too much to ease us, and save us from hell.

But when they had stripped him again, and nailed him upon the cross high in the air, he who had so long kept silence with pain and misery, at last "spake with his tongue." "Listen all ye isles, and hearken all ye nations, what the Lord God will say."

And he cried and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

This seems to have been the first cry Jesus made from the cross; and, as he had now entered his high priestly office, his pale and wan skin was his white ephod, his wounds, his black and blue places, the wheals and furrows of the lashes, the scratches of the crown of thorns, and blood streaming and dropping upon all his aching and stained members, was the embroidered robe; his reeking nail-prints were for a censer, out of which ascended the sweetest smok and the most pleasant savour that ever came up before God's throne. Just as the priests of the law spread their hands towards heaven when they burned incense or offered sacrifices, and (while their spices and gums perfumed the mercy-seat)

made

made their supplication for the children of Israel, so did Jesus Christ; he spread his hands upon the altar of the cross, and offered his own innocent, and now cut and mangled flesh in the room of sinners, and made his almighty and prevailing intercession, which he began thus, "My Father, forgive them." Moses was esteemed the meekest man, but his patience was often tried, so that "he spake once unadvisedly with his lips." And Elias, the good man of God, made intercession against Israel in his anger. David also, the most lively and bright figure of the King of kings, in his haste prayed against his adversaries. But though Jesus had all the wrong done to him which could be invented, and though he was hanging in the most shameful spot, upon Calvary, the place of execution of murderers, rebels, and blasphemers, the very gate of hell, and though all were deriding, tempting, teasing, and provoking him round about with bitter reproaches, and presumptuous mockings and jeers; though they had put him in the middle of two thieves, that all who looked on should reckon him the greatest; yea, though the very thieves themselves were reflecting upon him, and Jews and Gentiles, princes and the mob, the priests and people, all were adding to his sorrow, and as it were trying to make him angry, he did not cease to be the same gracious Lord, but "loved with everlasting love," and the most they could hear from him was, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

All they did, proved how far Satan had deceived the world, and made appear what a blind and hardened state the natural state is. The whole company thought they were serving God, and zeal for their religion, as they thought, prompted them on to crucify and blaspheme their true King. Jesus knew who was at the head of all, and that his own

enemy had done it, and therefore prayed for his persecutors, and endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. He had before prayed for his apostles and disciples, but now he prays for his enemies, for the drunkards and whoremongers, for the thieves, robbers, and extortioners, for the irreligious and infidels, for persecutors, and profane, and for all sinners whose crimes and evil deeds tore and oppressed him; for the sins of the unchaste and lustful he was exposed naked and ashamed before all the world, and before his own mother, and the other chaste women who followed him. O come, ye lecherous and defiled men and women, and see what ye have done to our Saviour! Ye drunkards, you have mingled for him the wine, the wormwood, and the gall! Ye proud, ye have trod him under foot, and abased him as "a worm, and no man," ye have stripped him and made him ashamed! Ye unjust, ye have nailed his guiltless hands with such piercing pain to the tree! Ye wanton, ye have made sport at him! and ye despisers of godliness, ye have set him at nought and mocked him in a purple robe! Ye sensualists, ye have made his grief intolerable, ye have made him fast and suffer want? Ye careless, for you he cried out and wept rivers of waters! Ye easy and unconcerned, hear what he says to you, "Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by, behold and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, wherewith the Lord has afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger?" how justly might he have said to all in his displeasure, "Depart from me!" or left the world, wicked and stupid as it was, to have suffered its full punishment unpitied? How might he have spared himself the trouble of suffering and dying for so hardened and rebellious a generation as he foresaw and foreknew we should be? or at least left unhelped and accursed all such as would not be obedient

obedient to him, but by their sins crucify him and put him to an open shame? O love—pure, free, distinguishing, and sovereign love, would not permit him to do this. He still loved his enemies, and those who did not love themselves, and amidst the height of their revilings and barbarity, in the keenest of his torments, and when most vexed and tempted, he became their Intercessor, and got in between the offended and the offenders: He got between heaven and earth, as it were, to meet the storm, and take the blow from his poor children: “He stood in the gap to turn away the wrath,” and became their Advocate with such strong cries and tears, that he prevailed and gained their cause: He made peace and obtained their pardon of his heavenly Father. God had once spoken to his servant Moses, to get out from among the people, that he might destroy them in a moment, because of their murmurings against his prophet? and often, notwithstanding the tender intercessions of Moses, his judgments overtook the unbelieving, and some fell by earthquakes, by serpents, by the enemy, by the plague, by fire, &c. And, lest this great day’s sins and crying rebellions should have stirred the divine wrath, Jesus prays for them with such vehemence, and with such irresistible force: every beating pulse, every feature, look and groan, spoke for them in the eyes of the Lord, and every gaping wound was like so many open mouths, suing and entreating for mercy, till he had obtained mercy, even eternal redemption for them.

This cry of our Saviour is yet the language of his heart above, and though uttered now so many hundred years ago, is of the same force and effect this moment in the presence of God, as if his Son was now bleeding upon the cross and speaking these words. His blood speaks still for us; and when we pray to be forgiven, it is only like the echo of our

Saviour's prayer. When we cannot speak, or do not know what to ask, that speaks for us, and asks all we want, "My Father, forgive them." For, let our case be what it will, or let it appear in such a light as it please to our view, we need forgiveness, forgiveness alone: We need this every minute, every moment, and to our last breath. Whoever is taught of God his own sad estate, feels it thus; and his constant hunger and thirst is for forgiveness; his daily and hourly cry is, "My Father, forgive me."

This then is the high-priestly prayer and general intercession of our Chief-priest and Bishop Jesus, and by means of which alone the pardon of a guilty world was merited, and by means of which we are heard, accepted, and saved for ever.

The second time our Saviour spoke from the cross was to his disconsolate and afflicted virgin mother, and to John. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Behold thy Son, and to the disciple, Behold thy mother."

It has been seldom taken amiss of friends and departing relations or parents, if in their dying agonies they have neglected to speak to those who stood by, or not answering them, or spoke a word to their most tender acquaintance and dearest friends; and had not our Saviour said any thing, but continued to sigh and languish in his deepest sadness and sufferings, one should have thought it no wonder, nor esteemed it a proof of his cold affection to his friends: But though "there was no sorrow like to his sorrow," and though the devils were round him like dogs and bulls on every side, though his whole body was on the rack, and his soul sinking under the weight of all men's sins, and pained with the sting of death and hell, he could not forget his people;

ple: he saw his beloved mother's tears, and it touched him; therefore he spoke to her, and said, "Behold thy son." As if he would have said, O weep not, John shall be to thee a son, and shall be in my place to thee; look upon him henceforth as thy child, and love him as thou hast loved me; he shall be a comfort to thee in thy old age, and shall be in my stead, when for a little while thou shalt see me no more. It has been often observed, that though our dear Saviour loved the blessed virgin, and chose her before all the virgins on earth to be his mother, yet he always called her Woman, and never Mother. Elizabeth, when she was filled with the Holy Ghost, calls her the Mother of my Lord. The disciples and evangelists also called her the Lord's mother, but Jesus did not; and herein our Saviour meant not disrespect or coldness, or want of a filial affection to the best of mothers, for Jesus loved her eternally, and without doubt she is now with her God and Son in his throne in heaven, "and all generations shall call her blessed:" But he knew how in years to come the enemy would work, and would, under pretence of religion, ascribe that to her which was only due to her Son; or lest, through weakness, his disciples should esteem her a goddess, and worship and pray to her, and so rob the Redeemer of his just honour and praise; therefore Jesus called her always Woman. She was indeed a woman and a sinner, and needed God to be her Saviour, as she expresses it in her song. Besides, it was needful for our Saviour to call his mother Woman, that we might depend upon it, and be thoroughly persuaded that he was the seed of a woman. Let us therefore esteem her blessed above women, in that God did not abhor her womb, but humbled himself to be flesh of her flesh and bone of her bone; and in that body he took of her, he saved us to all eternity;
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but then let us know, at the same time, she is what the Lord called her, a woman, a sister, a fellow inheritor with the saints, and saved and blessed through her faith in Christ as we are. When a certain woman had heard our Saviour preach in the days of his flesh, she cried out, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck." As if she would have said, Blessed is the mother of such a child: but Jesus answered, "Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." Hence we may learn that the virgin's keeping his word, her great faith and trust in him, was more than her bearing Christ into the world.

So much seemed necessary to say on this head because our Lord said to his mother, "Woman, behold thy Son." But after he had comforted her that bare him in this manner, he looked upon John and said to him, "Behold thy mother." As if he would have said, Be to her what I have been; comfort her and love her for my sake; be thou loving and tender of her, and let her love and be tender of thee. This was the renewal of this new commandment, "Love one another."

Our Saviour did not intend this merely for these two saints, he meant it for all his whole church, and would have us learn, that that was still uppermost in his breast, and on his heart from everlasting, to love us; and no torments, hell, nor death, though they come like floods upon him, could make him forget us. He thought upon us when in the travail of his soul, and bid us love one another from his cross. Our Saviour intended his elect should be one family even upon earth, and therefore said, "Woman, behold thy son; son, behold thy mother." Younger Christians should reverence and esteem the aged as parents; the aged should help, advise, and love them as dear children, and remember,

ber, we are one man's sons, we are brethren, and have no father upon earth, but one Father which is in heaven; and the very mark and badge of our discipleship among men must not be our order, discipline, or sound profession, though all these are good and praise worthy, "but by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples," says our blessed Master, "because ye love one another." John says "He that loveth not his brother, is not of God."

There is a real and solid truth in this doctrine, "Ye are brethren;" all the ties of consanguinity, friendship, and being of one country, stock, or family, are by far less binding than the being baptized by our Saviour in one Spirit. It cannot be otherwise; where true Christianity is, there is lasting, everlasting love. Nor is the love of the children of God mingled with that painfulness which always accompanies carnal love; nor is it sullied with lust, or forced by a good education, or kept up and maintained with temporal views; but it is the immediate work of God, and a spark of the flame wherein Jesus offered up himself. The love of Christ constrains us, and this love to one another is not confined to such as are converted alone, but is extended to all mankind, to our enemies and persecutors, but is especially and reciprocally felt and known by the household of faith. •

They love even to death, and whenever a company of believers are together, the Heathen world must be constrained to confess, "Behold how these Christians love one another!"

The third time of our Saviour's speaking from the cross was to one of the malefactors, who was awakened at the intercession of the Lord, and on whom God immediately answered his Son's prayer. It should seem by what St. Matthew and St. Mark write, that this man had joined the blphemers in
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the beginning to revile Christ. "They that were crucified with him also reviled him." He doubtless had been a notorious rogue, and guilty of the blackest crimes, which had brought him to that shameful and painful end; but the vilest and most abandoned appear generally serious when they are going to die, and seem then afraid and concerned; and this should have been expected from these thieves, who knew before the sun was down they should be in eternity; but they behaved as if both had been possessed of the Devil: they seemed insensible of their danger, and though they stood at the very verge and brink of hell, mocked an innocent person who had done nothing against them, and said, "Save thyself and us, if thou be the Son of God."

Jesus heard and saw it with an aching heart, but made intercession for the transgressors between whom he was hanging, and with whom he was numbered. He loved sinners, and had the chief of them at his right hand and at his left: and though they were as brands already in the burning, he pitied them, and said, "My Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Immediately one has his heart touched by the finger of God; a divine work is at once effected, he believes in Jesus, and blames his fellow-robber for reproaching him. This is the tender fruit of repentance. He found himself to blame, and wanted to convince others of their mistake too, that they might not add sin to sin, and then, methinks, I see him turning (with a trembling and a guilty look) to Jesus, saying, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." He who before derided the Lamb, now calls him Lord, and begs to be remembered by him when he was entered into his kingdom. Our dear Saviour was always poor and mean in the world, but never did it seem more unlikely that he had a kingdom than now. His disciples,

ciples, who before had ventured to believe he was a king, now sadly doubted, and were dejected at seeing him die the cursed death of the cross; but herein the Holy Ghost appeared with power, and the Lord made bare his arm. The dying felon sees beside him a poor afflicted Jew, a friendless and unpitied man, reproached, plagued, and upbraided as an impostor on every side; he hears his groans and sighs, sees his bonds and weakness, and yet prays to him as to his Lord, and begs a part in his kingdom. This was a true faith; this was believing indeed; and this justified the ungodly. Jesus did not let it pass unmingled, or answer him with anger; and put him in mind, that as he had served Satan and the god of this world, he should perish with him: nor did he reflect upon his past cruel and hardened behaviour, but at once receives the lost sheep, embraces the returning prodigal, and answers him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." He did not only forgive him, but honoured him more than ever a saint or martyr was honoured, he took him with him into his Paradise; he became one of the first-fruits of his painful death, who was saved as a prey out of the teeth of the lion. All the angels and blessed spirits, who had waited from Abel, saw, as the Redeemer expired, he took hold on the soul of a guilty malefactor, and from the gate of hell led him in merciful triumph into the gate of heaven. No one can venture to say this man's good works saved him, for he never did any, and was ready to perish when free mercy found him out. He was suffering death temporal for theft, and perhaps murder, and was going into the second death for infidelity, and trampling under foot the blood of the Son of God, when Jesus snatched him out of the burning, as he waded through the pangs of hell, and made him a pillar and monument of mercy in

in his temple for all generations. He pardoned him openly, that by that instance of free grace he might chase away despair from all who wanted to be saved, and that he might make the worst and chiefest of sinners learn, that he can save even to the uttermost, that this man receiveth sinners." O see this pattern of mercy, ye ancient and grey-headed men, who are going to the grave with your bones full of the sins of your youth! Come to this dying Lamb, call upon him, "Lord, remember me," and you shall find mercy through this thief's mercy. Ye poor slaves of lust and wine, ye thieves, whoremongers, and whores, look upon the Redeemer, and pray him to remember you. Though you have reviled and slighted him, and by your obstinate sinning set him at nought and put him to grief, repent and look to him as the thief did, and you shall "taste and see how gracious the Lord is."

This mercy of mercies was done so publicly, and shewn on one so abominably vile and undeserving, as I have before said, that Jesus might save us from despairing, and make an eternal impression upon our hearts of his love and willingness to save sinners. What greater sinner could there be? And what greater mercy could have been obtained? Lord! I wish this mercy upon myself, and all that hear me; when I die, as my last hour approaches, say to my soul, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

The fourth cry of the Son of God was, "I thirst." The Soldiers thought naturally that his mouth was parched up with drought, because of his pain and sighing, and therefore they filled a sponge with vinegar or sour wine mingled with myrrh, and offered it to him, but he refused to drink it. He had said in his last supper, when he gave about the cup to his disciples, "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, till I drink it new in the kingdom." It was
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not therefore wine he thirsted for, nor did he receive for his faint spirits any comfort from beneath. Had he thirsted to take revenge on those who were his betrayers and murderers, how easily might he have called for fire from heaven as Elias did, and consumed them all, or caused the earth to open as Moses had done to Corah and his company, and made them sink down into the bottomless pit? At his word the destroying angel would have smitten all with plagues, and left no soul alive; but that was not his mind, "He came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them, and had no pleasure in the death of a sinner;" but his thirst was to have them saved. He longed for this more than David had done once for the waters of the well in Bethlehem, and languished, waiting for the long wished-for hour, when all souls should be given into his hands. He knew the time drew near apace, and his thirst was keener and more fervent and sharp than ever, when in God's just and equitable judgment the world should be declared his purchased possession, his reward. If he had only thirsted for the new wine of the kingdom, or longed to be again in heaven in his former glory, he could have called twelve legions of angels at a word, who would have conveyed him with songs of joy to his throne in the twinkling of an eye; but though, no doubt, his wearied out and dried-up body wanted rest, and his faint soul panted for peace, and all within him longed to see the baptism accomplished, yet he so loved his church, that till her ransom was fully paid, her bonds cancelled, and she acquitted in the judgment above, and past all danger, he would not rest, but continued to thirst with all his heart and soul, till he had obtained her eternal pardon, and got her "out of the jaws of the lion, and out of the hand of the enemy." When he had once seen this accomplished, and he had "betrothed her to him-

self in righteousness," (for this was the day of his espousals, and the day of the gladness of his heart) then his divine thirst somewhat abated; "he saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied."

This thirst of Jesus kindles in devout souls somewhat of the same. As he looked after them with an insatiable longing, and desired with a great desire to keep the eternal passover with them, so they, when his loving and languishing eyes have looked upon them, catch the pure flame, and thirst to be beloved by him; they long and pant, and wish more to feel his love within, and to drink of the precious blood which he shed, than can be described. "Stay me with flagons," (is their language) "for I am sick of love. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine." This thirst of souls, this breathing of religious people is from the unfeigned want of a Saviour and his righteousness; and this is not allayed till they have found him, and then "they drink abundantly, and their joy is full."

But now the cloud grew thicker and blacker, the storm drew nearer, and thundered louder and louder over his head. Hell made her last and fiercest attack, the sword of the Lord pierced deep, and his judgments and thunder-bolts fell heavier than ever upon him; all the dregs of the cup of wrath were now to be drank up, and when all was dark and horrible round about, and nothing was heard but the raging of the enemy, and the barbarous rejoicings of those men who killed him, while it seemed to him as if the whole divine presence was withdrawn, and his dear heavenly Father had left his soul in hell; for he so truly and verily felt the curse, as if it had been actually and indeed so; then his flesh trembled because of the judgments; his eyes failed with looking upward; every angel stood aloof, and his heart failed, his soul drew nigh to hell, and all his bones quaked,

quaked, and shuddered with very horror, amaze, and torment. In this sad, this inconceivable sad condition was the dying Lamb, when he roared out like one in the deep of despair, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" O what did he feel, what did his soul endure, when this lamentable and piercing complaint was forced from him! the very remembrance and repetition of this cry makes the blood in our veins chill for very awfulness; it strikes with shame and confusion every believer, when they know with what anguish, gnashing of teeth, and hellish torture, Jesus saved them out of the lake; and hereby they get the truest insight of their wretched estate by nature, as well as of their great danger out of which it cost the Almighty Son of God so much to rescue them. Hereby also let us be comforted, and comfort one another; for since Jesus has experienced what a forsaken soul can feel, "he will never leave nor forsake us," nor will he hide away his face, in anger any more for ever. No, since he has endured our hell, and felt the sharpness of death, we shall escape; and his agonies, his painful struggles and pangs, his faintings and death-sweats, and this his terrible cry shall affrighten Satan and his angels, hush our souls, and allay our fears, that we may die without fear. As soon as he had thus cried, he took to him all his strength, and "with his own arm brought salvation to him, and his fury upheld him." He came to the dreadful crisis, and at once sprung into the arms of death and hell, drank up the bitter cup with trembling and astonishment, "tasted death for every man," swallowed up the curse, and in a moment tore away the sting of death, and broke down the gates of hell, making at once an eternal end of sin and wrath, and spoiling the evil angels and principalities of the armour in which they trusted, crushing under his red hot feet the

serpent in his just anger, and so caught his bride out of his service and power, saving her "with an everlasting salvation;" the sight of which gladdened all the attentive angels, who looked down and saw the tremendous combat, who all smiled again, and with new songs, love and joy, crowded round their expiring Master, whose praise for the blood of the cross they sounded instantly through all heavens, and began the honours to him which till this moment he had not, namely, they worshipped him for being slain. Mean while the sun broke out, which had been eclipsed from twelve at noon till now, when it was about three of the clock, and Satan retired like a dragon to his den, and left Jesus to depart in triumph more than conqueror.

Now therefore Jesus, knowing he had finished his hard work and labour, and that all things which had been written of him in the Psalms and in the Prophets had an end and were fulfilled, that the justice of God was fully satisfied, that with equity he had saved the world, and bought his church, he uttered his sixth cry, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." As if he would say, My dear heavenly Father, who hast so loved the world that thou hast not spared me, but given me up to die for them, behold I have now finished thy work, I have destroyed the enmity, and delivered thy poor people; now I come to thee, take my spirit, and receive the soul of thy wearied child again into thy bosom.

He prayed thus also to teach us how to depart, and into whose hands to trust our spirits when our strength fails, and we come to our death-beds. As he gave up the ghost into his Father's hands, so we give up our spirits into his hands. He is all to us what the Father is to him; and thus Stephen departed, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

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So may we die; so may we with confidence and safety have free access and liberty to fly to him at our deaths, and depart in peace through his death, without tasting the smart or pain of that which is properly death in his sight for evermore.

Jesus now cried his seventh cry with a loud voice, "It is finished," and then "bowed down his head, and gave up the ghost." One should have expected, after he had been so faint with bleeding, and so worn out with pain and travail, he should have spoke low and weakly as he expired, but "he cried with a loud voice," that all in heaven might hear it and sing, and all the spirits of the faithful, from Abel, might now see "the day of the Lord and be glad." When this cry was uttered upon earth, no doubt, all the heavenly hosts shouted for joy, and sung, "Now the kingdoms of the earth are become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ."

He cried also with a loud voice that all hell might hear it and retreat with shame, having lost their prey, their power and dominion over the souls of men, and all right to reign over them for ever.

But he cried with a loud voice, that all sinners might hear it, and know that now the redemption was finished, an end put to the curse, Satan's head bruised, death destroyed and spoiled, and its sting taken away, the keys of hell and the grave delivered into the hands of Jesus, the world redeemed, the fountain of sin and uncleanness opened, everlasting righteousness brought in, reconciliation made, pardon obtained, peace proclaimed, and the gate of heaven opened to all believers. All this and more is included in that cry of our Saviour, "It is finished," It implies, all whatever was promised in the Saviour is fulfilled, all his sorrows and sufferings are over, his trials are at an end; he has bought and redeemed

his church, and made his last words an answer to all their prayers till the great day.

When he had uttered this cry, "he bowed down his head," as if he would take one more look of his dear disciples and the world, which he had now purchased; and as if he would say to all, Come now near and let me kiss you, and then his dear soul departed, and he hung dead in the air, "like an ensign for the nations," according to the scriptures.

These loud cries, prayers, lamentations, and dying words of our Lord, are now so prevailing in heaven, and by means of which all we pray is heard, and finds acceptance before the throne of God. When ye pray, therefore plead the prayers of Jesus, and let the unutterable sighs of your tempted, heavy, sin-sick, or grieved souls, go up in the smoke of his bloody sacrifice; so shall ye obtain what you seek, and succeed in all your happy attempts for mercy. May ye all prove the power of the strong cries and tears of this dear Lord Jesus in eternity! Amen.

AN HYMN.

- 1 SEE on the cross my Saviour hangs,
All red with guiltless blood:
Sev'n flowing streams of purple hue,
Compose the healing flood.
- 2 Loaden with wrath and all men's sins,
Sev'n times aloud he cry'd;
Then knowing all things were fulfill'd,
He bow'd his head and dy'd.

3 And

- 3 And didst thou bleed seven times for me ?
I'll weep each day in seven ;
I'll imitate thŷ bitter cries,
And ceaseless cry to heaven.
- 4 Thy groans and thy high-priestly pray'rs
Before the throne I'll plead :
O God, my Father, think on these,
They have atonement made.
- 5 For ev'ry week's unnumber'd sins,
Which else would strongly cry
For vengeance ; hear his sev'n last words,
Nor let the sinner die.
- 6 Out of the bottom of my heart
I ev'ry cry repeat ;
O let my cries, through his desert,
Reach to thy mercy-seat.
- 7 Forgive me, Father ! Lord, forgive !
My mis-spent life I rue ;
I did not know what once I did,
When I offended so.
- 8 Vouchsafe me hence to look on thee,
As my own Father God ;
And thou, behold thy Son, and take
Me home to thy abode.
- 9 When my last hours approach, and I
Am ready hence to flee,
Say, " Thou to day in Paradise
Shalt surely be with me."

22 *The Cries of the Son of God.*

- 10 I thirst to feel thy Spir't in me
 A living-water-spring :
 I thirst, my bleeding Lord, to see,
 And 'midst his virgins sing.
- 11 Forsake me not, my God ! thy Son
 Me by his bleeding bought :
 Forsake me not, for Jesu's sake ;
 My God, forsake me not.
- 12 My soul into thy careful hands
 I fervently commend ;
 Keep me secure in Jesu's fold,
 And be a sinner's friend.
- 13 When my appointed time shall come,
 Let me depart in peace ;
 Say with a smile, "'Tis finish'd !" then
 From all my labours cease.

DISCOURSE II.

THE GIFT AND OFFICE OF THE HOLY GHOST.

ACTS ii, 38, 39.

Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

WHEN our Saviour was mentioning to his disciples his departure to his Father they were troubled, and could not consent to be left alone in the world without their dear Lord and Master. It was the more trying to them, who had hitherto entertained such Jewish ideas about his restoring the kingdom to Israel, that he should speak of going away; but the Lord tells them it was expedient, and bid them not be troubled; for, saith he, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come again to you," you shall not be left orphans in the world; "I will send you the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name. Now if I go not away, the Comforter cannot come, but if I go I will send him unto you; he shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have told you. He shall speak of me. He shall glorify me. He shall take of mine and shew it
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it unto you. He shall lead you into all truth. He shall abide with you for ever." This could satisfy them a little, but they understood not rightly what he meant till he was risen from the dead, and then he breathed on them and gave them his Spirit, and thus sealed them to the day of redemption, and at once opened their understanding in the scriptures concerning himself and his kingdom. But as he continued to instruct them in the forty days of his abode among them before he ascended, he yet bid them wait for this promise of him and the Father, namely a pouring out of the Holy Ghost, to empower and anoint them ambassadors and preachers of his gospel, and which he said should happen not many days hence. This said, he blessed them and was received up into heaven in their sight.

Accordingly not long after, while all the apostles and brethren were with one accord together in a house in Jerusalem, on a sudden they heard a sound from heaven like a mighty rushing wind, which filled the house where they were sitting, and there appeared as it were cloven tongues of fire, and sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This happened in the morning, and was quickly noised about in the city; and as there were in Jerusalem devout men, out of every Nation under heaven, there came together a multitude of people who all heard in their own language, though those whom they heard speak were all Galileans, while they were of many nations and tongues. Now, as the serious part were amazed above measure, and glorified the wonderful work of God, some mocked and made their game, saying, they were full of new wine and drunken. Then the eleven apostles stood up, and Peter spoke and declared, that none were drunken, since it was only
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nine o'clock in the morning, and therefore it could not be likely; but he said, "This is that which was promised in the prophet Joel, In the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, and on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit."

Then having spoken much of Christ, he saith, "Him whom ye have taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain, is exalted to the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." To this discourse of St. Peter, the Holy Spirit so set his seal, that many, who mocked before, were struck to the heart, and cried out, "What shall we do?" Peter answered, "Repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost, for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

This had such a blessed effect upon all that heard the word, that the same day were added to the church of God three thousand souls: May the Lord go on to add to his people, by means of the same gospel, till all the earth is covered with his knowledge as the waters cover the sea, and all flesh have seen the salvation of God!

I shall speak but little of the doctrine of repentance, and of baptism, &c. now, because my design is to open especially this great doctrine of the gift of the Holy Ghost.

I know in this degenerate age, I might say, in this sinful and adulterous generation, no doctrine has
been

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been less regarded or believed than this; for how many deny entirely the inspiration of the Spirit? And others content themselves without it, as if it was not material if they have it or not; whereas none can be saved who have not Christ in them the hope of glory. I shall therefore shew out of the scriptures, that this promise of the Father was foretold by the prophets and confirmed by the Lord Jesus and his apostles, as necessary to everlasting salvation, only I will first speak a few words of the doctrine of repentance, of baptism, and of remission of sins, and pursue my purpose as I have said.

Repentance is, like the Holy Ghost, and forgiveness of sins, &c. a gift of God. "He shall give repentance and remission of sins to Israel." It has been a deceit of Satan to persuade people they can repent when they please, and this keeps half the world easy in their sins. The revellers, the robbers, the unchaste, the drunkards, the swearers and liars, with all the friends of the world and lovers of pleasure, go on thinking one day to repent and be good, and when the Holy Spirit awakens their consciences to a sense of their danger, and they muse awhile on their condition, and are ready to tremble; or when by the sudden death of some near relation or friend, or by some uncommon tempest, or dream, or sermon, or by reading the scriptures, or by sickness, or escaping some great danger, the Lord is pleased to shake their hearts, they soon find ways to put all by, as Felix did Paul, with, "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." They get some merry company, some play, sing, drink, or walk out, and with the promise of turning ere long to the Lord, or repenting before they die, they lull to sleep in a carnal security their poor souls, till perhaps before they are aware, they rush into hell, as a horse rushes into the

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the battle, and repentance is hid from them till it be too late.

Oh! did these poor men know what true repentance was, they would not rest till they had obtained a heart of God, truly sorry that they had so wickedly lived, to the grief of our Lord Jesus; they would mourn for him whom they had pierced, as one mourneth for his only son, nor could they be satisfied till they had found his pardon. Where a true repentance is, the soul hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and mourns for a Saviour, and will not be comforted without him. They leave all their sins, and hate the very places where they have done amiss; and beside a sense of their original sin, or sinful nature, their hardness of heart and filthy state weighs them down, so that they can forget to eat, but day and night, in bed or up, their heart and soul cries out for mercy till they get mercy. This is a repentance not to be repented of. To be sorry for a season, and then go back again as a dog to his vomit, or the washed sow to wallow in the mire, is at best but a dog's repentance, and the nature is not changed nor the heart altered nor softened in the blood of Christ at all. Do not content yourselves with it, for it is nothing; but if ye would be saved, ask of the Prince of Peace, who gives repentance, and he will do it for you. One tender look from him can melt the heart of stone, as it did Peter, and do the deed at once. Do not, O! do not trifle with it, and think you can return when you will, lest to your hurt you find it with you, as "Esau, who found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

Of baptism I shall say little, because I praise those who use the baptism of water in faith, in the name of the Lord. It is just and right, and must not be slighted; yet I know there is but one true baptism,

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and that is of the Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and without which all other baptisms are but faint shadows.

John the Baptist baptised to repentance, but the later apostles of Christ for remission of sins; and in the very act of baptism some have received remission of their sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost; but our Saviour is not confined in such cases, for many have been baptized among us who neither know what repentance or remission of sins mean, but are without both. Oh! let such come to our Saviour, and he will forgive them; he will blot out their sin, and they shall know it here upon earth to their great joy and comfort; the Holy Spirit will comfort them with manifesting and applying the blood of Christ to their hearts, and in this there is nothing more needful than a living faith. God does not ask any great thing of us, he does not require us to perform some severe task, ere we can attain this, but it is the free gift of God, and whoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins. Oh! that none here would rest without it a day longer, but ask it of Jesus Christ, who was exalted also to give forgiveness of sins to his people, and they should soon see they have not asked in vain.

I now come to speak of the promise of the Father concerning the Holy Spirit, and to speak of his office, &c. in the world.

Ezekiel had said from the Lord, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit also will I put within you; I will put my spirit within you." Jeremiah had prophesied of the same. Isaiah also had said, "Thus saith the Lord, I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Zechariah

hinted

hinted also at the same; but Joel had been more especially particular, because formerly it was esteemed only the privilege of seers and ministers, therefore he said "It should be poured out upon the sons and daughters, upon the servants and hand-maidens;" or, as St. Peter expresses it, "on all, as many as the Lord our God should call." The apostles always promised the Holy Spirit to such as believed; and St. Paul asked it as a necessary question, "Have you received the Holy Ghost?" and affirms boldly, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." This was our Saviour's doctrine; he said, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will send you the Holy Ghost, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because they have not seen him, neither known him; but ye know him, for he is with you, and shall be in you."

It is most sure that the churches of our nations so believed also; or why is it said, ' * All works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God.' And again, ' Godly persons feel in themselves the workings of God's Holy Spirit, but curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, are thrust by the devil into wretched and unclean living, no less perilous than despair.' Also there the prayer of David is used, ' Take not thy Holy Spirit from us, and cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee,' &c. Also, ' Grant that we being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit.' Also, ' God who didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to re-

* See the Thirty-nine Articles.

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joice in his holy comfort. How can men who deny the gift of the Spirit now, and use these prayers, escape mocking of God, and drawing near to him with their lips, when their hearts are far from him? Dreadful is their case indeed; they have ears and do not hear: they have eyes and see not; they pray, but not with the Spirit, nor with the understanding, and must not look to receive any good thing from the hand of the Lord; they cannot receive it, they do not believe the promises of God, but stagger at them through unbelief.

The office of the Holy Spirit our Saviour has set down to be three-fold, namely, "He shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment."

First, he saith, "He shall convince of sin, because they believe not in me."

This sin of unbelief, ever since our first parents were seduced to disbelieve God in the garden of Eden, when he said, "In the day that ye eat thereof," i. e. the forbidden fruit, "ye shall surely die," is so deeply rooted in the heart, in the mind and nature, that nothing but Almighty God can convince a man duly of it.

It should seem a strange thing to tell Jews that they did not believe, at a time too when their religious worship was at the highest pitch of grandeur and order, and when all nations looked upon them as the city of perfection, the joy of the whole earth; but it would appear far more strange to attempt to prove to people who profess christianity, and the serious sort of these too, who have had the strictest education, kept to the public worship, read the scriptures, and heard sermons, shunned bad company, and used much prayer in private, that after all, it is easy to be deceived, and be without faith in Christ. I am sure this was my case from my youth; I aimed sincerely at righteousness, and wanted
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to be saved, yet had I died in that state, I do not know what would have become of me, for I am persuaded, though I watched, fasted and prayed much, gave alms, frequented the sacrament, and did all I could think of to make my conscience easy, yet I was entirely a stranger to faith, and did not know what believing in him meant. As often as I strove to cry peace to my heart, and to think myself right, so often was the Lord pleased, as it were, to impress upon my mind, "Yet lackest thou one thing." But as I never heard any one scruple their faith, if that came at all into my thoughts I would not suffer it, till one greater than my heart opened my eyes, and made me see and feel I had no confidence in Christ. I did not believe in him for remission of my sins; for to speak truly, I believed nothing more than a heathen or turk: I thought if I did all in my power, and was obedient to the commandments, prayed many times in a day, fasted often, attended the church service, the sacrament, helped the poor, refrained from gross sins, &c. I should be accepted, and of the righteousness of Christ I expected no more than, that in case I fell short, it should help to mend my righteousness; I did not believe any one had his Spirit, or knew remission of sins. My heart had no real benefit from his death or blood-shedding, more than a serious Jew; nothing that could make me happy or deliver me from the fear of death, or the power of sin; my nature remained the same, only I washed and made clean the outside of the cup and platter, I garnished the tomb and whited the wall, but within I felt the old stainings, the same bad tempers and ill affections. When I saw this, and knew with all my glorious profession, I had not faith, my heart sunk, and I became more and more concerned and restless, till our Saviour gave me to believe, and

ended my fears. In such a state as I was in before I experienced this, I would not have ventured to depart this life for all the gold in Arabia. Faith in Christ is not a light matter, or what can be learned as any other art. It is not consenting to the truth of the scriptures, or confessing Christ, or acknowledging the mystery of the Trinity, and signing such and such articles; for though all this is well, yet it does not save the soul; it is not a justifying faith; it is not laying hold on him, and getting his righteousness; but all this can be held, and we remain; as touching the faith, reprobate; therefore must the Holy Ghost, who only knows the depths of Satan's deceits, and the desperate wicked hearts, convince us of this unseen and condemning sin. He does not say he shall convince the world of sin because of drunkenness, idolatry, disobedience to parents, murders, adulteries, witchcrafts, &c. for the law has pointed out these, and cursed the doers of them, and therefore it is said, "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" but even this is meant only in relation to the fruits, as the way to convince a man that a tree is bad, would be to shew him the bad fruits, and his mouth must be stopped; so the law, to convince of the fallen and depraved nature, condemns all works of darkness and unrighteousness, but goes no farther; the Holy Ghost only lays the axe to the root of the tree, and convinces us, that the reason of all sins and offences, is a heart impure and corrupt, an unbelieving and faithless heart, which does not believe to salvation. Our Saviour^f has concluded all in unbelief, and made it plain in the gospel that we are not lost on account of Adam's transgression, nor because we have sinned, for a remedy is prepared, a cure is found for both these; but who comes not to him by faith, who has not such a faith by means of which they can know him, speak with him, receive him,

him, and be washed and saved by him, he dies in his sins and cannot enter into his rest; and why? because of unbelief.

Had a man faith in the promises of God, then he could never scruple, If we can have the Spirit? If we can be born again here? If we can know our Saviour in the world and have eternal life, and the assurance of our acceptance with God? Because these are the benefits of the redemption by Christ; and if we do not believe they are found in this life, we believe nothing. The Turks speak of a paradise in another life, the Jews of going to their father Abraham, the old heathens boasted of their walking in Elysian fields after death; but it was only dreams of things of which they had no certainty; they died, and did not know whither they were going: So we, if we have not the foretaste of the power of the world to come here, if we have not the kingdom of heaven within us, and the earnest of our everlasting inheritance, we are also in the dark and in uncertainty, and are in no better state than those who never heard Christ named; for at last, all the real hope we have must be, because we have lived sober or religiously, or been obedient, &c. and our boast of trusting in Jesus, and his blood and merits, will prove to have been only in words. When the Holy Spirit convinces therefore of sin, all the self-righteousness, all dependance upon our religion and morality tumble like Babylon to the ground, and poor, and naked, and blind, and miserable, the soul thirsts for the revelation of Jesus Christ, and for "those times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." Nothing can satisfy such but the whisper of the Redeemer to the heart, "Your righteousness is of me, I am your salvation;" and till this is brought about, the Spirit helps to pray with groanings which cannot be uttered;

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tered ; he teaches them to ask after the will of God, and leads the soul on till he has brought it to the blood of Christ, which is the well of life, and then he bids it drink, yea drink abundantly. He lifts up the blind eyes which he had anointed with his eyesalve, to the cross, and shews the ransom ; he directs them to look and be saved, to believe and receive the remission of their sins.

This brings me to the second thing which our Saviour mentions as the work of the Holy Ghost, which is, " to convince of righteousness, because, saith he, I go to the Father, and ye see me no more."

As no man can duly convince his brother of the sin of unbelief, so neither can one assure another that he is righteous : This also is the work of God.

Whoever can be persuaded that he is a good man and righteous, is unwise, because he trusts upon man, and builds upon the word of flesh, and has men blind as himself to be his comforters. Miserable comforters are they all. But the children of God have dug deeper, and though they have not seen our Saviour bodily, who is now gone to the Father, and will perhaps be seen no more till he comes in clouds, and every eye shall see him, yet I say, though they see him not, yet believing in him, they have a divine confidence and feeling of his love and presence, as sure as if they did see him, and they rejoice in him with joy unspeakable and full of glory. " Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." This faith is the gift of God, and keeps the soul more blessed and unshaken than if their eyes had seen or their hands handled the Son of Man. If an angel could appear to one and tell him of his being in the favour of God, and beloved by him, it would not have the effect upon us which we might at first imagine ;
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for it would be easy afterwards to doubt and reason if it was not a delusion, a fancy, or Satan transformed to deceive us ; but the " Spirit is the witness, because the Spirit is truth," and cannot deceive ; and he does not only once or twice give us a glimpse of the lovely Jesus, and him crucified, but he makes our bodies his temple ; he comes in and dwells with us, will never leave or forsake us, but will abide with us for ever. He comforts beyond all pious friends, and glorifies our Saviour so before us, as no preacher can : He assures our hearts, and writes and stamps his mind there, so as no angel can do it, and puts it beyond all doubt, that Christ and his righteousness are ours, that his merits are imputed to our faith, and we stand thereby without spot and wrinkle, or any such thing, before the throne, clothed in this long white robe. A man through his help can believe in Jesus as his true Lord and God ; can trust all upon his atonement, if he had ten thousand souls ; he receives the end of his faith, namely, his salvation, and is forgiven, washed, justified, and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

He believes and knows that he is a child of God, and has therefore the Spirit of adoption in his heart. " The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. He hath the witness in himself, even eternal life," and all this comes only through the death and obedience of our Saviour, " who is made to us righteousness and salvation," received through faith, and manifested by the Holy Ghost to our unspeakable joy and comfort. From this part of his divine office and work, and because he allays our fears of death, hell, and judgment, wipes the tears away, and eases us in all trials, temptations, and burdens, and in our last hours bears
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us up with an holy confidence, and gives us, like Moses from the top of Pisgah, to look over into our good land and depart joyfully hence, that he has merited that name the Comforter. Oh! may he be such a comforter to you and your children all the days of your life!

I come now to speak of the third part of his work, and that is, "He shall convince you of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

The Holy Spirit does not only thoroughly awaken a soul, and shew it the righteousness of Jesus, &c. but makes them "overcome by the blood of the Lamb;" and therefore, without fear of being again seduced into the enemy's hands, we may go forward, because he is bruised under our feet. We are saved out of his hands for ever; another Lord is our master: we are in another kingdom; we do not belong to the world; the god of this world has lost us, with equity, and the God of heaven and earth has bought and saved us, to be sold and lost no more.

We know now who has overcome the dragon and his angels, and has the keys of hell and death, namely, he who is our best friend, our Lord, our Saviour Jesus. In this respect therefore does the Spirit comfort us, and seal us to the day of redemption. We shall not perish, Satan cannot pluck us out of our Redeemer's hands, he is now judged to his chains and lake; the verdict is given on our side, we have overcome by the blood of the Lamb. All praise to his holy and blessed name!

But before I conclude this discourse, I must shew who have a right to receive the Spirit: And lest any should suppose, because I am a sinner and lived wickedly, I shall be excluded from so great happiness, let me comfort such by repeating the words of the text,

text, "The promise is unto you and to your children, and to all, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." We may not dispute this truth, it is too plain and glaring in the scriptures, to be denied; all may and must have the Spirit of Christ in them if they will be saved. He strives and labours with all, "he is with you, and shall be in you." Only open your hearts and he will come and sup with you, and you with him; "Open the everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in."

If you but feel the want of this heavenly guest, you know what is written farther about this matter, "Ask and you shall receive; your heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him." May this encourage you all to seek and find this unspeakable gift, and have him with you and in you to the end of the world! Yea, may a double portion of this Spirit rest upon you henceforth for ever and ever. Amen.

AN HYMN.

1. **H**OW sad's my state! I know not how
To please the Lamb, or do his will!
Myself, and God, I want to know,
Yet ignorant of both am still.
2. I mourn because I cannot mourn,
I grieve because I cannot grieve;
I hate my sin, yet cannot turn,
I hear the truth, but can't believe.

3. Helpless

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3. Helpless am I, and self-condemn'd,
 Incurable I see my wound;
I'd come to thee, but am ashamed!
 O where shall help for me be found?
4. Where shall so great a sinner run?
 Dangers on ev'ry side I see;
I am undone, undone, undone,
 Unless our Saviour comes to me.
5. Let pity move thee to appear,
 Sinner-receiving Son of God;
In my behalf be kindly near,
 And quench my crying sins with blood.
6. Reach out thy gentle hand to give
 Salvation to a wretch distress'd;
Give, O dear Saviour to believe,
 A weary soul who wants a rest.
7. I know thy open wounds afford
 Eternal refuge unto some;
There would I fly, my dearest Lord,
 O speak, and tell me there is room.
8. This if thou dost, I ask no more,
 Glad would I for thy chariot wait;
And when I stand on Sion's shore,
 I'll worship ever at thy feet.

DISCOURSE III.

THE NEW BIRTH.

JOHN iii. 3

Except a Man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.

THIS is part of the discourse our Saviour had with Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, who came by night to him, and talked with him of the Kingdom. It should seem that this man had been one of the best of the Jews, and who waited for the consolation of Israel? and as at that time many devout people were in daily expectation of the coming of the Messiah, or the Desire of all nations, so he was inquisitive who our Saviour could be, having heard of his miracles, and was assured, as he tells Jesus, that he was no mere man; but a teacher come from God. "For, saith he, no man can do these miracles which thou dost, except God be with him."

Our Saviour knew well the gross and carnal ideas of the children of Israel about the kingdom, and began at once to tell him, that his kingdom was not to be seen with the outward eyes, or as he said to the Pharisees in another place, "It cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here, or, lo there, for the kingdom of heaven is within you." Luke xvii. 20, 21. Thus he now teaches one of their chief rabbies, that no one unconverted could see the kingdom, much less enter

into it, "Verily, verily, he saith, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Although this doctrine had been taught in David and Ezekiel, Psalm l. 10. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. and in other scriptures of the prophets, yet it appeared quite new to Nicodemus, and struck him with amazement, so that he asked directly, "How a man could be born when he was old? Can he, saith he, enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Our Saviour told him, if a man could enter into his mother's womb and be born again, that would not help him, for still he would be flesh, and of the same nature of that from which he was born; but he says, "He must be born of water and of the Holy Ghost;" he must have a spiritual birth, and become spirit of his Father, who is a spirit, and by whom the sons of God are begotten of incorruptible seed, and bids Nicodemus not marvel at it, for a third time he saith, "Ye must be born again." He was more and more astonished at this doctrine, and by his question, "How can this be?" he confesses, he was a stranger to this mystery, and did not understand the new birth. Our Saviour, to convince him that there are things earthy not to be accounted for, and which yet are real and true, mentions the wind, which one hears and feels, but "cannot tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth, so, says he, is every one born of the Spirit." As if he would have said, How can one describe the wind to him who has not felt or heard it, or account for why it blows to-day high and not to-morrow, or whence it comes, or whither it goes, and yet we know there is such a thing as wind? so one born again, one on whom the Lord hath breathed a second time, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," can be assured of this mercy, and thenceforward be a
partaker

partaker of the kingdom of God, feel in his heart the happy change he works there by his Spirit, rejoice in his salvation, know he is a child of God, and partaker of his divine nature, as surely as he was flesh of his natural father's flesh, and with all boldness can call Abba Father, having received the Spirit of adoption, and being really born again into the family and household of God; but he cannot reveal or describe it to another; he cannot account for it; nor can he make another, whose eyes the Lord has not opened, see the kingdom and happiness to which he is restored, because it is what no man knows but him that receiveth it.

. Nicodemus heard all our Saviour said, but continued yet to reason about this new birth, till our Saviour asked him, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things? If I have told you of earthly things and ye believe not, how should you believe if I tell you of heavenly?" i. e. If I have told you of the wind, which is earthly, and you do not comprehend or understand, how can you understand heavenly things which are past finding out? This part of our Saviour's discourse should teach us two things:

First, That all masters in Israel, all rulers, preachers, and ministers of God's word, should first of all know and be witnesses of this mystery, and none should venture to teach others till they are taught these things, and have learned them of God; for this is the true character of a servant of Christ; we speak what we know, and testify what we have seen; and thus properly are they his witnesses; they not only preach the divine truths in words, but have themselves proved and experienced them in their own hearts. "We are witnesses, says St. Peter, of these things."

Secondly, We must learn to bridle our too curi-

ous search into some matters, because they are too high for us, and believe, because the Lord has said it, without wanting to understand how it can be, or endeavouring to comprehend to give reasons for the mysteries of Christ, since his matters are not like the things of the world, which men may search out and account for, though in many things they fail and fall short; but in the things of God we should always think, "as the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts. His ways are in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known."

In this doctrine of the New Birth, this humble mind is necessary; for, like as a blind man cannot be a judge of colours till his eyes are opened; nor the man born and brought up in some close place be able to understand any thing of the wind till he has felt and heard it, so neither can any one judge of the work of God upon the soul, till he has obtained, of his loving Lord, an understanding, whereby, as St. John says, "We know him:" or, what our Saviour calls "ears to hear, eyes to see, and a heart to understand." When this is done, he shall find no such difficulty to believe, or find the right way; for fools shall not err therein: and a babe thus taught of God is wise, and understands, believes, and is already happy and saved.

It is remarkable, our Saviour does not go about to demonstrate the matter, or explain it, for that is no where his way. He saith, and we are to believe for his word's sake, nor must we look for a greater or better proof of the truth than that he has said it, "It is written," we do not trust him, and where a demonstration is given, faith is not of use. He is God, and worthy to be believed; and as here in this world our main attainment is not to comprehend, or fathom, or know as we are known, but to believe,

believe, and in the world to come we shall see and pry into the deep things of God, where there is no danger of pride, and where we shall know perfectly; therefore let us endeavour only to feel, to experience, and enjoy in our hearts this great blessedness, which no natural man can understand, but will constantly enquire, "How can this be?" till his heart feels the want of a New Birth, and then with tears and prayers he will seek it and find it.

I shall now speak briefly of these three heads; First, Of the necessity of the New Birth. Secondly, Treat of its happy effects in the heart. And Thirdly, Of the means of this change, as far as it concerns us.

Our fall in Adam, and the corrupt and wicked nature we bring with us into the world, has made a regeneration absolutely necessary; and though I know how many strive to oppose the doctrine of original, or the first sin, yet, I so treat all arguments, and those things said directly against the words of scripture, just as St. Paul calls it, "The wisdom of men, and what is foolishness with God." All the law and gospel agree, "that in Adam all died." All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Thou art called a transgressor from the womb. The thoughts of man's heart are evil from his youth. "I was born in sin, and in sin did my mother conceive me. All are gone out of the way, there is none good, no not one." These are some of the many scriptures which prove the general and universal fall and decay, and which is the reason why we must be born again. If there had been no ruining at all, then all need not be renewed; and if we had not a bad and corrupt nature, a heart which is not good in the sight of God, then there would be no need of a new nature. If, therefore, no scripture could be brought in confir-

mation of the doctrine of the fall but the text itself, it would prove it sufficiently: for either God created us bad, or we are fallen: or if a man can be so blind as to think we are well, we have a good nature, we are not fallen, nor spoiled, nor ruined, then he must see no need of a New Birth, and despise the doctrine our Saviour has taught so plain in this his discourse with Nicodemus; and in many other places of his gospel; and is verily and indeed dead, and his foolish heart is darkened and blinded by the god of this world, who therefore keeps him ignorant of his last state, lest he should see the need of the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and should seek it with all his heart and be saved.

Let who will oppose it, the true doctrine is this, We were created upright, innocent, and very good, but Satan, who envied our happiness, found means to seduce our first parents into sin; and when they, to whom God had given in subjection all things in the world, fell into the enemy's hands, all went to wreck, and all born afterwards were home-born slaves of Satan; nor was it possible for it to be otherwise; for Adam having forfeited his right to be a son of God, and having been now poisoned and hurt by sin, could not beget children in a better nature than he had himself, nor could a clean thing come out of an unclean; but all the whole lump of mankind were leavened with the direful leaven, and the curse came upon all. In this woful condition was the earth and all souls, when God looked down from heaven and saw "how all flesh had corrupted their way before him, and were like sheep gone astray," or vines degenerated and become wild and worthless; and here he opened and revealed his eternal purpose, which was to save us
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out of this horrible pit, and restore us to the dignity of sons of God : wherefore he did not leave us in our fallen estate, or forsake us unhelpt, but resolved to make all things new, and to give especially a New Birth to such as believe in him, which should be brought about and effected by the Holy Ghost ; and so we, who were by nature children of wrath, might become children of grace, and receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby we can call God, in the strictest sense, my Father ; and this, after our Saviour had redeemed us by his death, he goes on to do for us now. He gives us a new heart, or, as David calls it, “ a clean heart and a new Spirit,” and he is our God, and we are his people. We are his sons and daughters, and he is to us a Father ; and thus saith the Lord God Almighty in the scriptures.

It is a false and dangerous notion which some entertain, that our Saviour by his cross only set us a good example, and that at best we can become no more than servants of God, for therefore said our Saviour, “ I have not called you servants. I go to your Father and my Father, to your God and to my God.” And St. Paul says, “ We are not servants but sons ;” and this is a common thing in the bible to see the believers and elect of God called his children, his sons, his family, his flesh and bones, &c.

But lest any should despise this glorious liberty of becoming children of God, and be tempted to stop short of the prize of our high calling, I must yet add one thing, and that is this, A New Birth is not only necessary to make us joint-heirs of the glory to come with Christ, but none can be saved without it: none can go to heaven, none can see the kingdom, or enter into it, who has not experienced this change. To make it doubly weighty
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and important, our Saviour delivers this truth with his usual solemnity in such cases, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He says it who cannot lie. The word is gone out of his mouth who cannot repent, and is confirmed with an everlasting Amen.

Whoever can yet think so lightly of the matter as if he can be saved though he be an entire stranger to this birth of the Spirit, this new creation wrought in the heart, he shall find our Lord and Master does not trifle or jest, his words are true and faithful, and to suppose one can be saved who is not born again, is to suppose our Saviour can break his word and oath. No, he shall be found true, though the whole race of men should perish. Let therefore none venture too far thus presumptuously, lest they repent too late; nor make light of this doctrine, lest they should be found speechless in that day when our Saviour shall make it appear, they once heard of the necessity of being born again, but they despised it.

Many deceive themselves, by thinking they do not despise it, but hope it is no other than baptism, or another name given to a change of behaviour and manners, &c. but even their easy and careless thoughts about so great a matter is a sort of despising of it; for, if any thing, we should be sure it should be in this, since without it we cannot be saved, nor see the kingdom of God. How many have been baptized who are still utter strangers to this renovation, or renewal of the heart? How many have changed their morals, and altered their course of life, who never experienced a New Birth, or are sure what it means to this day?

I will not dispute but that some have been born again at the time of their baptism, (for we have
instances

instances of it in the scripture) and that others, whose course of life have been altered, were also born again from above; but without this in the heart, without the work of the Holy Ghost, who washes us in the blood and water out of Christ's side, all the rest is but an empty sign and shadow, but not the substance: I will therefore again and again beseech and pray you, be aware, lest you, like the Jews, boast of your church privileges, &c. and be, after all, no child of God. "He is not a Jew who is a Jew outwardly, whose circumcision is in the flesh, but he is a Jew who is a Jew inwardly, whose circumcision is in the heart." He is not a true Israelite who can only glory that Abraham was his father, but he who walks in the steps of the faith of Abraham, so think you. He is not a real christian who has only been baptized with water outwardly, but he is a christian who is one inwardly, who has been baptized with the Holy Ghost and is born again; and he only is a child of God whom the Lord hath made so, and not he who without this, glories of his being of the best religion, or a son of the most holy church; for else, let him be what he will, and boast how he please, "except he be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

But now I come to treat of the effects of the New Birth, which is the second thing I proposed to speak of.

The change made at the time of our adoption and washing in the blood and water Christ shed, is real and happy; for then all those fears, jealousies, and uneasinesses which generally, if not always, precede it in the upright and sincere, are brought to an end: They are no more afraid of being lost or cast away, for now "God the Spirit beareth witness with their spirits that they are children

dren of God;" and that though a servant abideth not in the house alway, yet a son or child of God abideth alway, and shall go no more out; no man shall pluck them out of their Elder Brother's hands. They feel they are now fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and that henceforth they are numbered with the general assembly and church of the first-born who are written in heaven, they are counted among his jewels, and called his people, and confessed before the Father and all the angels as the sheep of his pasture. They know they no more belong to the world, but are born out of it unto God and the Lamb; When the Lord counteth up his people, it shall be said of Sion, "This man was born there," Jerusalem above is his mother, and as surely as he was born of Adam's flesh and blood, and partook of his nature and sin, so surely is he new-born of the Second Man Adam, and is partaker of his nature, of his spirit and righteousness, so that he can properly, and strictly say, Lord, thou art my Father, and our Saviour will not be ashamed to call such brethren. Besides this comfortable alteration in the mind, and over and above the joy that is brought to such at the revealing or manifesting Christ to them, they are indeed endued with a new heart and with a new spirit. Our Lord Jesus has begun to create all things new, and the old strong heart, the former dead spirit, is taken away, and even the body so far partakes of this New Birth, that those in-dwelling and in-bred impurities and desires are overflowed with the water of regeneration, and drowned in the blood of the Lamb. The body is washed with pure water, as it is written, "I will sprinkle you with water, and you shall be clean;" And now that which was once a sink of sin, a nest of every unclean and hateful bird, a den of thieves, is made the

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the house of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth thenceforward in them. He who before laboured with them, and drew them near to himself, now is in them, and will make his abode with them. The flesh is not changed, nor will be, till it is returned to the dust from whence it was taken, or till Jesus comes. It will be sown a vile body, and at the appearance of the Lord in that day it shall rise in his likeness; and when he makes a new earth our bodies also shall be made like his glorious body, and therefore is the resurrection called in the scripture, the "redemption of the body." But then, though we who are born again of God have still our weak and spoiled bodies about us till we go hence, yet no child of God may live to himself or after the flesh, but they serve the Lord Christ with their bodies and souls, and all their members become instruments of righteousness. No more do fleshly lusts pollute it, no more are they drunkards, or railers, or disobedient, or lovers of the world, or careless, or servants of sin; they are a redeemed people, and their works, words, and all their behaviour, shew they have been with Jesus. His mark is seen upon their foreheads, his blood besprinkles their modest and lovely conversation, and makes all their words savoury: In short, all old things are done away, behold all things are become new, and every child of God is a new creature, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, by which their light shines unto men, and they glorify their Father which is in heaven.

I come now to speak of the means of this change, and that is faith. He that believeth is born of God. To them gave he power, or the privilege to become sons of God, even to them that believe in his name, which were born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. St. Paul also

also speaks after the same manner: "We are the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus." If you desire to become heirs of the kingdom of heaven, or, as our Saviour says, "Children of the kingdom," then before all things this is needful, which is, a holy confidence and reliance on Christ, a living faith in him. By faith I would not mean what is generally meant in the world, where almost all who call themselves christians imagine they believe; but I mean that faith which we have of God, and which is the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, whereby we have the firm persuasion and assurance that Jesus the true God was made a man, and suffered out of pure love and mercy to us, our death and curse, and has now fully pardoned our sins and given us eternal life. Do any find they have not such a faith, or are inwardly conscious of their being without the Spirit in their hearts, then let them be serious, and seek it, and they shall find it; let them ask and they shall have it, for your heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. But whenever man can make jest of the whole, and one while mock at the inspiration of God, and soon profess they do not believe any such thing, let such know, they cannot receive it because of unbelief; they cannot become children of God, since they, in their hearts, do not believe the promises of God nor his doctrines, but cast all his words behind their backs. Though I thus speak, my brethren, I hope better things of you, be you of another mind, and let nothing less than being born again satisfy you, or make you easy. Let it be your chiefest and highest aim to be our Saviour's mother, and sister, and brother, for such are they, and they only, who have his Father for their Father, and his God for their God, and are born again of the same spirit which bare him of the virgin Mary,
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and conceived him, and brought to pass his incarnation. May that Holy Spirit even now give you to understand all I have said, and awaken you to a thorough knowledge of your fallen estate, and neither leave you nor forsake you, till he has made you sons of God, and manifested and applied the merits and blood and water of our Saviour Jesus to your hearts, and enable you to say, or rather force you with joy to confess, I am born of God; he is my Father, my God, and my strong Salvation.

To that Holy Ghost, together with the Father, and his Son Christ Jesus, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE IV.

THE DANGER OF INFIDELITY ; OR, THE NECESSITY OF A LIVING FAITH IN CHRIST.

2 COR. xiii. 5.

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the Faith.

IF the Holy Ghost had not known and foreseen how some would have made mistakes, through the subtle working of Satan and the weakness of their own hearts in the matter of faith, there would have been no need of this exhortation : And if I was not convinced that many even now suppose they believe who are far from it, I would not have chosen this subject ; but as this is the case now in Christendom that many err concerning faith, and deceive themselves, crying Peace, when there is no peace, I shall speak briefly of the true scriptural doctrine of faith, and of the benefits which we receive thereby ; and then pray you, in the apostle's manner, to search yourselves and examine your hearts if ye have faith, or be of that number who concerning faith are reprobate.

Now ye know how trifling a matter almost all men make of faith ; and hence it is that so many foolishly ask, Why, have not we all faith in Christ ? have not we been baptized, learned the catechism and the creed ? and do not we all confess the Bible to be the word of God ? would you have us think ourselves heathens and infidels ? I
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thank God, (says one) I have believed from my cradle; another has been a believer ever since he could understand, &c. &c. All this proves they know little about the matter, but would make me question if they knew at all what that precious thing means. I do not think it would be proper to say directly to all sorts of people, you do not believe, you have not faith, because our Saviour's method is best: "Believest thou on the Son of God?" And yet this way of dealing with some would make them angry, and would appear just as impertinent to many who name Jesus Christ's name, as if one should ask, Have you got eyes? do you see? But however this may seem, it is a necessary question; and I wish all who hear me to-day would ask their own hearts and examine themselves, Am I in the faith? do I believe? Happy is that man who can say, with the poor man in the gospel, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief!"

The common description and definition of faith in Christ, is the consent and assent to the truth and veracity of the scriptures; and if this was a true account, then our Saviour need not to have scrupled if he should find faith upon earth at his second coming, nor the apostles to have given such a charge concerning keeping the faith: for all who call themselves Christians are believers, and their number is many millions in the world. But bear with me and let me tell you, as a servant of Jesus Christ and as your servant for Christ's sake, such a notion is dangerous and against the mind of all the scriptures, and the Apostle of our profession in particular, who has spoken so honourably of faith, and made sure all his promises to them that believe. Luther had said, 'Faith is a divine work wrought in the heart by the

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Holy Ghost ;' and a greater than Luther said, " Faith is the substance of things hoped for ; the evidence, or, as some translate it, the witness, the persuasion and assurance of things unseen." Faith is a divine testimony and evidence in our hearts, whereby God assures us, that he who is, and was, and is to come, was once a man for our sakes, and has died for us on the cross, and took all our sin and curse upon himself, and has loved us with an everlasting love ; has healed us by his stripes, has washed us in his blood, justified and sealed us to the day of redemption ; and this we believe and know ; this we have learned of the Father ; this no man can teach his brother, nor any woman her neighbour ; but this, all must learn of God, as it is written in Isaiah, " All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children," Isaiah liv. 13. This all men have not ; but all who ask it have it, all who seek it shall find it, and none have need to perish for lack of it, but apply to him who reveals his wisdom to the babes, and he shall not apply in vain ; but all must have it or fall through unbelief ; for " without faith it is impossible to please God ;" and, " he that believeth not, shall be damned." To be short, as sure as one believes that there is such a country as America, though one has not been there ; or such a mountain as Teneriff, though we have not seen it ; or such a thing as the sea, though we have not been near it ; so verily can a man believe the promises of God concerning Jesus Christ and his righteousness, which are given and read to us, only with this difference, that of the former things a man may be firmly persuaded, and venture all that he has in this world upon the truth of it, and yet get nothing by it ; but no man can believe the latter, with-
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out enjoying at the same time the very blessings and substance of what he believes, because faith is the substance of things hoped for, and it is done to us in the moment we believe according to our faith : we can thenceforward say, I believe and know thou art the Christ the Saviour of the world : I believe thou hast loved me, and given thyself for me. Blessed are they that are of faith, Gal. iii. 9.

It is most certain that a believer shall be saved, as it is written, " If thou believest in thy heart on the Lord Jesus, thou shalt be saved," Rom. x. 9. Our Saviour says the same in his last words, " He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved," Mark xvi. 16; and St. Paul and Silas said to the jailor at Philippi, " Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 31. But who can think all who profess Christianity will be saved, or hope all who are called by his name shall escape judgment, let them live wicked as they will, when our Saviour has so plainly said, that, in the last day, many shall come to him and say, " Lord, Lord, we have been called by thy name, we have eat and drank in thy presence," &c. to whom he shall say, " Depart from me, I never knew you," Matt. vii. 22.

Now one of these two propositions are true ; either but few have faith, or such as have faith can be lost. The Holy Ghost contradicts the latter throughout all the Bible ; shall we oppose him ? God forbid ! " Let God be true and every man a liar." No wicked man has faith. No drunkard or unclean person, no whoremonger, or adulterer, or swearer, or railer, or persecutor, or friend of this world, is a believer. He is dead to God while he lives, and his carnal dead faith consenting to the scriptures will profit him nothing. He is without faith and no

true Christian. He that believes, obtained his faith from the Holy Spirit, and is taught of God ; and he [who] knows it, and has that understanding which St. John mentions in the fifth chapter of his first epistle, and at the twentieth verse, whereby we “ know him that is true, and are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ, and this is eternal life.” But why need we many words ? hear ye the words of the Lord : “ He that believeth shall not perish, but have eternal life,” John iii. 15. “ Whosoever believeth on him, is born of God,” 1 John v. 1. “ He that believeth, hath the witness in himself,” 1 John v. 10. “ To them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name,” John i. 12. “ Whosoever believeth, shall receive remission of his sins,” Acts x. 43. But the time would fail me to bring together all the proofs of this doctrine which are to be met with in the holy scriptures, for then I must bring the whole Bible ; for therefore was all written, that you might believe on the name of the Son of God, and have eternal life through his name, 1 John v. 13. John xx. 31. By all these scriptures you may easily try if you have faith. Enter then into thy closet and shut the door after thee : hold an assize in thine own breast, and judge thyself, that thou mayest not be judged of the Lord ; examine thyself, if thou art in the faith ; ask thy heart, Have I eternal life ? am I born of God ? are my sins remitted ? am I a child of God ? else what good does my dead faith do ? what benefit have I by the death and blood of Jesus ? or what are his sufferings and wounds to me, if I am not healed and helped thereby ? Nor let such thoughts rise in thy heart as if none could now be thus blessed or have the same faith which once the disciples and martyrs had ; for there is but one faith ; and except

cept thou hast that one faith, thou canst not be saved; nor reason sophistically, as if it was possible to have true faith, eternal life, and pardon of sins, and thou not know it, for it is anti-scriptural. All his people know him, from the least to the greatest. His sheep know him; and therefore says St. John, "I have written to you, that ye may know that you have eternal life;" and thus, in the text, St. Paul shews you how to find out if you have faith or not. "What! he says, know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you? Be honest and upright; do not desire to quiet your consciences, or cry to your hearts as in another sense Paul cried to the jailor, "Do thyself no harm;" but be jealous about your estate, and examine whether you are in the faith. Awake out of your slumbering condition, nor be content till you can say, I believe: I believe Jesus loved me and died for me! With this faith begins eternal life and all happiness. It is this that justifies and brings peace to the heart. It is to this the Holy Ghost bears witness that we are the children of God; and where this faith is in the heart, there the souls overcome the world, are delivered from sin, are washed and saved from the dread of death, through which all their lifetime they were subject to bondage, and set above the fear of hell and Satan, as if both were abolished for ever. But where this true and living faith is not, there Satan and sin reign; there the soul is in continual terror, and has a sort of constant, fearful looking for judgment and fiery indignation; and well it may be so, for no creature is safe without it. The most self-righteous and seemingly holy, and even the sincere man, who seeks to make himself good and just, is, after all, but almost persuaded to be a Christian. He still is uneasy and restless, because
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yet he lacks one thing; one thing is still needful; it is faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.

How some people can reconcile the fears of death and eternity with real and inward Christianity, or the secret doubtings and falling into desponding thoughts about their interest in Jesus with faith, that I do not understand. Can one, who believes his name is in the book of life, be afraid to die? Or can one who believes Jesus, the Lamb of God, has taken away his sins, shudder at the approach of eternity? O it is not likely. Does the child tremble because his school is done, that he may go home to his dear parents, whose only son he is? Or does the poor shipwrecked mariner shudder to see the day break, and find himself just ashore? Or does the slave lament to be ransomed and freed, or the poor prisoner weep and grieve to have his prison-door opened and his chains knocked off, because his king has pardoned him? Ye know, my brethren, it is contrary to nature. But just as the wayfaring man rejoices to see the end of his journey, or the labourer, who has toiled hard all day, is glad to rest; so a believer rejoices when his chilling limbs forebode his departure, or his faltering eyes presage his hastening end. As he believes, so he expects to meet the Lamb his Saviour in peace, and so he shall find it and not be disappointed. Yea, the believer, when he but thinks on the happy moment when he shall depart and flee away, has his heart leap for joy, and he hastens on with expectations and longings, which cannot be uttered, for that time of grace: and whence comes this? Because he believes; because he has that faith once delivered to the saints. He has that only dependence on God his Saviour which the former children of God had, and by which the confessors and witnesses of Christ, in all ages, so gladly

gladly yielded to all sufferings, and even to lay down their lives. But the greatest heroes in Christianity were weak and like other men, till by faith they waxed valiant in their fight, and obtained the witness that they pleased God: then life was Christ, and death was gain. Examine thyself now then, and see if thou hast faith. Dost thou believe in Jesus that he is thy Saviour? Does thy heart bound and dance in thee to answer, Yes, I believe? I believe he is my Lord, my Rock, and my strong Salvation. How would it be with thee should now the sun, that ruled this day, be darkened, and the moon and stars withdraw their shining? Suppose that now one should surprise thee by telling thee, He is coming on the clouds of heaven with all his angels, the sea and its waves are roaring, and the mountains and hills removing, and heaven and earth fleeing before the Son of man, how would it sound to thee? Would thy heart be glad? Shouldest thou like to feel the earth trembling underneath, and see yonder blue sky filled with myriads of blessed spirits, and hear all the angels hailing down the God whose vesture is dipped in blood, with all their harps and trumpets sounding before him, and hear louder and louder the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, Arise and come to judgment! Put the case near to thee, for that day shall surely come, and thine eyes shall see the Son of the most high God descending to divide between the sheep and the goats; and dost thou believe that thou shouldest meet him with joy? Can thy soul think on it with pleasure? Canst thou say, Yes, Lord Jesus, I long for thee: O come quickly! Then happy thou, and blessed be the day when thou wast born; for so surely as thou trustest in him, so surely as thou believest in Jesus, so surely shall he confess thee in
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that day, and thou shalt enter with him into the bride-chamber, and be ever with him.

But examine thyself: how camest thou by this faith? how was it when thou believedst? Methinks I hear thee say, O! I was once, like others, dead while I lived; I loved pleasure, was fond of the world, and contented myself with the form of godliness, till the Lord called to me as he did once to Adam, "Where art thou?" till he stopped me in the height of my sins (as he did Balaam, with his sword in his hand) and made my heart hear him say, "Why persecutest thou me?" Then did I awake, and my whole life and all my sins became a burden intolerable and more than I could bear; I was afraid I should never be saved. A sense of my guilt was ever before me, and my heart failed within me. I attempted to make vows and resolutions of amendment; and, if possible, would have made myself righteous: but, O! I said, all my righteousness was filthy rags; sin revived, and I died; I was ready to perish; I felt my heart like a stone; my hypocrisy and shame and sins became abominable in my eyes, so that I was quite miserable, and felt how well I deserved hell. I knew my infidelity; I knew I did not, I could not believe on the Son of God: I wanted faith in him, and wished to know he loved me. But then did the Holy Ghost direct me to him, shewed me my bleeding High-Priest, led me to the living fountain of his blood, and made me feel that the least drop could wash me whiter than snow. O how did I languish and thirst for his blood! how did I sigh for his wounds and wished to be saved! I believed he could save me and none beside: and now I was drawn to him; now came the day much to be remembered, the time of grace: I called upon the Redeemer, and my constant thought was, "Have mercy

mercy upon me ! Have mercy upon me !” I held him with an unspeakable longing for grace ; and then did he smile, and I received faith in his name ; then did he whisper, “ Thy sins are forgiven.” I believed he loved me and shed his blood for me ; I believed, and felt my sins were done away and my iniquity purged ; all was new in a moment ; I had eternal life ; I was born of God, and God’s Spirit bore witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. I had the witness in myself, and was sure the promises of God were true, I believed and knew that I was my Beloved’s, and my Beloved was mine.

. . This, this is the language of a faithful soul ; this is the natural way in which an enamoured Christian expresses the manner of his believing in Jesus. He knows he was once blind? he knows he was once in unbelief till the Comforter came, whose first work and office is to convince of sin, because they believe not in Christ ; and then, secondly, he convinces of righteousness, namely, the righteousness of the Lord our God, the righteousness of the second Adam, which righteousness is made ours by faith, and justifies all who believe in Jesus from all things from which it is impossible to be justified by the law, or works, or any thing else.

I know this doctrine sounds strange and uncouth to many ears, especially to such as have never questioned their faith or belief in our Saviour. But, as I said before, whenever men think I have always believed, it is a manifest argument they have not believed to this day. Wonder not then if such condemn this doctrine or despise it ; nor be discouraged if thou art persecuted and slandered for contending for this faith. If you should get such people to confess this, and no other is the

the true faith of God's elect, they would seem themselves stripped of their Christianity in a moment, and could say, as once Laban did to Jacob, "Thou hast taken away my gods, and what have I got more?" It is therefore so hard to convince such that they believe not, that it needs the Holy Ghost, and none else can do it. It is against the pride of our nature to suffer one's self to be accounted an infidel or an unbeliever; and yet, like it or not, all are such who have not eternal life, forgiveness of sin, and the inward witness in their hearts, that Jesus Christ our Saviour loves them.

Whosoever then here examines himself and finds he is not in the faith, let him with tears and shame confess it before our Saviour, and resolve not to be satisfied till they have it. Cry in your hearts to him who is the Author and Finisher of faith: and though some should try to hinder you by persuading you that you need not be concerned, that you are certainly good Christians, that God does not require such things at your hands, &c. do as Bartimeus, cry so much the more a great deal, till Jesus stands still and says to you, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" But above all do not let unbelief be cherished or encouraged, that is the worst sin of all. It is a mercy and a blessing when a soul can believe who Jesus is, namely, the Lord and a Saviour. Do you believe this? then say, "Lord Jesus, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" thou hast power to quicken and give eternal life to whom thou wilt; thou art the Lord of heaven and earth; all souls are in thy hands; and nothing is too hard for thy right hand to bring to pass: say to my heart and eyes, Ephphatha be opened, and grant me a confidence towards thee, what thou art pleased to call trusting and believing in thee: increase my faith, and let

let me see the glory of God; let thy Spirit cry in my heart, Abba Father!

There are many who will not believe that faith is now the same as formerly, or that thereby we can know the Lord, or be persuaded he loves us, or feel our sins forgiven: and, for my part, I do not know what such people pretend to believe more than the devils. Believe what they will beside, it brings no true happiness to the heart, and is no more than confessing, how good our Saviour was to the primitive Christians, what wonders he did in our father's days, and how the saints found mercy, but now it is as if all was ceased; and the God, whose name is the Unchangeable, is altered, and his faith no more of effect. How can such an one get forgiveness, when he does not believe it is to be gotten? Or, how can he believe to salvation, who does not expect to be saved here, or be assured of going to heaven through faith, when he denies there is any such thing in the world? He cannot have it; he cannot enter into the rest, because of unbelief. Our Saviour's word and promises are rejected by such an one, and God shall reject him, because he has not believed the only begotten Son of God. This was that sin which ruined so many in Israel in the time of Moses: they were destroyed of the destroyer; they were slain with serpents; there perished, in one day, twenty-three thousand; and wherefore? Because they erred in their hearts, and believed not, so God "sware in his wrath, they shall not enter into my rest." This hindered our Saviour to do many mighty works in Nazareth, because of their unbelief. And this was his resolution when he blessed his disciples and was taken up from them upon mount Olivet, "He that believed and is baptized, shall be saved; but

he that believes not, shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. So, on the other hand, "all things are possible to him that believeth." "Only believe," says our Saviour, "and thou shalt see the glory of God." "Believe on me, and thou shalt see greater things than these." It is hence that our Saviour so often asked such as came to him, "Believest thou that I can do this?" And always tells such as he had healed or pardoned, "Thy faith hath saved thee; thy faith hath made thee whole: be it unto thee according to thy faith." And it is on this account that the apostles have spoken such excellent things of faith; how through it the fathers knew they were righteous, walked with God, had the testimony that they pleased him, wrought their righteousness, were blessed and justified, and had peace with God; and especially in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, after the scripture had observed how all the prophets and noble champions of God, who saw afar off the promises and believed and died in faith, it is said, "Wherefore God was not ashamed to be called their God, but prepared for them a city." And in all St. Paul's epistles, but especially to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, he sets forth that we are justified and made righteous only by faith in Christ; that our faith, as Abraham's, is imputed to us for righteousness; and that it is not our good deeds, strict life, or observing the law, will make one just before God, but faith in the dying and crucified Lamb; and it is a manifest error, and dangerous, when people have supposed to get to heaven any other way; or, in opposition to the faith, assert, we must be justified and saved by our works. Of such people there are two sorts, some who make nothing of faith, but place all in the moral and obedient life of man; and these

these are a sort of polished Heathen, a refined company of Atheists, who can sooner venture upon their works than upon the blood of the Son of God, and who hope to get in by some other way than by him. No, they never shall; he has sworn, and will not repent: "To me shall every knee bow." And that God, whose dying and redemption they despise and make light of, shall esteem them thieves and robbers in the presence of all the angels, because they entered not in by the door Christ, but sought to climb up some other way. They may do what they will, and build as well as they please, and glory in their duties, their charity and moral life, it is all filthy rags, it shall fall, and great shall be the fall of it, because it is built upon sand.

But there is another sort of men, who have a notion of their doing part, and Christ the rest; that is, they will be the foundation, and Christ shall be the top-stone; they the first, and he the last. They will take his righteousness, the piece of new cloth to mend their old raiment: these are such, who knowing they have not true peace of heart, nor any certainty that they shall be saved, imagine not that their fault is in their being unbelievers, but they think they must do a great deal, and so add and join together their works and faith, and so make up their righteousness, and so fly to St. James's Epistle, and reason, Can faith save a man? "Is not our faith made perfect by works? Was not Abraham himself justified by works, and Rahab?" I answer, the faith St. James speaks of, all who are called Christians have, but it will not save them, it is a dead faith, such as devils have, who believe there is one God and tremble, but are not better for all their belief; so it is St. James sets at nought

such a believing, and bids us to shew it by our works; and whenever I see men living sinful lives, and yet prating of faith, I would say, shew it by your fruits; and know that as yet you have neither part nor lot in the matter. Where true faith is, there is a holy life; there are indeed the fruits and good works which adorn the gospel of God our Saviour, and shew to the world that we are just and faithful men; and this is what St. James means when he says, Abraham was justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac upon the altar: that is; then he was justified in the sight of his whole house and in the sight of his servants, when he spared not his only child, but offered him up when God called him to do so. But who can forget how many years before this it was that Abraham believed God, and his faith was accounted to him for righteousness; even before Isaac was born or himself circumcised, and he received circumcision as a seal of the righteousness which he hath by faith, being yet uncircumcised. But the true matter is this: before God nothing avails but Jesus Christ, and faith in his blood: and whosoever believeth, his faith shall be reckoned to him for righteousness; and the obedience and good works, and life and suffering of Jesus, with all his merits, are thereby ours, and we know it, and stand before God therein perfect and just; and this, and this only is our wedding-garment, our white robe, our clean linen: but before men, faith alone does not justify, for there our good works must shine, that they may see them, and glorify our Father which is in heaven. And, as I said before, it is nonsense to boast of faith when one is a slave of sin, a breaker of the law, a lover of the world, an unclean person, such know not what faith is; for faith purifies the
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the heart; by faith we are saved from sin; we overcome the world by faith; and this faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God: it is not natural, it is from above, and is the greatest blessing a true Christian has in the world, for hereby he sees Jesus, has peace through the shedding of his blood, is persuaded of salvation, and feels and is confident he has eternal life; so that he can say, to the honour of our only Lord Jesus Christ, "I live, and yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." And whereas another doubts if Jesus be the Lord, he believes in him: another doubts if Jesus loves him, he believes it and rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory: another doubts if faith alone justifies before God, he believes it, and is justified and saved already: another doubts and questions if one can know Jesus before death, he believes and knows him to be with him and in him, and his body is now his temple; another has scruples about his eternal state, he believes, I am washed, I am justified, I shall be with him for ever, I am sealed to the day of redemption: "whether I live I live to the Lord, or whether I die I die to the Lord; whether I live or die I am the Lord's." In short, as David and St. Paul say, "I have believed, and therefore have I spoken; so a believer speaks because he believes, and is not afraid. But others, who have not faith, whom John calls the fearful and unbelievers, are afraid to speak, and continue in doubt and fear; or, if they are not sincere, they scruple not to brand the true faith with all opprobrious names, and call it blasphemy, presumption, and all that is bad: but let such know, a time shall come when they shall rue such behaviour, and feel the want of

of

of the faith they have despised ; for who can escape ? who enters eternity, or leaves the world cheerfully, but he who believeth that Jesus is his Lord God and Saviour, and whose blood has washed away all his sins ? You see then how necessary it is to try your own hearts, and examine yourselves, if you are in the faith : do this, then, in the presence of that Son of man, whose eyes are like a flame of fire, and let your hearts be lifted up to him till you can joyfully and without fear say, I believe thou art my Lord and my God ; thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back ; thou hast loved and died for me : so shalt thou go thy way rejoicing, and live and die in faith, and be happy and blessed here and hereafter. Amen.

A N H Y M N.

- 1 **H**OW happy he who firm depends
 On Christ, nor doubting faints !
 But earnest for that faith contends
 Deliver'd to the saints ?
- 2 Whose faithful spirit feels within
 His everlasting love ;
 Whom he believes, though now unseen,
 Unless by those above.
- 3 No more in darkness left to grope,
 By faith enlighten'd now,
 His heart enjoys the living hope,
 And foretastes heav'n below.

4 His

- 4 His name he knows is now enroll'd
Among that chosen train
Who, highly favour'd, him behold,
Who once for them was slain.
- 5 O Holy Ghost, whose office 'tis,
That faith to me impart ;
That earnest of eternal bliss,
That witness in my heart.
- 6 Inspire me with that confidence
In Jesus and his death,
That cheerful I may go from hence
To th' Author of my faith.

VILLAGE DISCOURSES

ON

Important Subjects :

*PARTICULARLY ADAPTED TO DOMESTIC
WORSHIP.*

BY THE LATE

REVEREND JOHN CENNICK.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

Revised and enlarged,

AND A RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE,

BY

MATTHEW WILKS.

PART II.

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PART II.

DISCOURSE V.

NAAMAN CLEANSED.*

2 KINGS v. 13.

My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean?

THESE words were spoken by the servants of Naaman the Assyrian captain, when he was despising the means (God by Elisha) had ordered him to use for the healing of his leprosy. The whole history of his cure and conversion is so very instructive, that I would paraphrase upon it awhile; and then declare the freeness of the grace of our Saviour to poor leprous sinners, and the way in which all must come to his kingdom.

* The following Address was prefixed to the first edition of this Discourse :

TO THE READER.

I have read the following sermon, and like it much.—It was preached by a young witness, not indeed as yet sent out by imposition of hands from man, but I am persuaded, taught and sent out by God. This sermon is one proof of it.—I could give a thousand more, and rejoice at this opportunity of publicly acknowledging the preacher of it to be a dear servant of Jesus Christ.—May the Lord bless what he has written to thy soul, O reader, whoever thou art, and incline thee to pray for him, and thy friend and servant in Jesus,

London,

March 11, 1742-3.

VOL. I.

G. WHITEFIELD.

Benhadad

Benhadad the king of Syria had often sent out his soldiers by companies against the children of Israel, and had taken among the captives a little maid, and she waited on Naaman's wife, who, when she saw that her master had the disease of leprosy, and had known in her country, how many were healed of the Lord by the hand of Elisha, she said in the house, "Would to God, my Lord was with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy." After this manner she ceased not to speak, until one told it unto Naaman, saying, "Thus and thus saith the maid that is of the Hebrews." It might be the girl had been an eye-witness of some of the great things done by Elisha, or had known some of her neighbours that had been recovered by him, and had heard the fame of the man of God, how he did not refuse any who came to him, and therefore was more earnest to have her master go and try. After some time, what the maid spake came to the ears of king Benhadad; and because Naaman was beloved of him, and was a great man in the army, and esteemed on account of the many victories the Lord had given by him to the Assyrians, the king immediately hastened Naaman forward in his way to Samaria. He was one who worshipped the gods of the heathens, and not knowing the free gift of the God of Jacob, he thought to please him, and to get an interest in his favour, by offering his prophet a great present. Wherefore he sent ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment, and wrote a letter to the king of Israel, to desire him to get his servant healed of his leprosy.

Now the king of Israel thought he only meant thereby to pick a quarrel with him, and therefore rent his clothes, saying, "Am I a God to kill or to make alive, that this man hath sent me to heal his servant?"

servant?" Elisha hearing of this, sent to the king, saying, "Why hast thou rent thy clothes? Let the man come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses, and with his chariot, and stood at the door of Elisha." It is remarkable he did not come like a poor, filthy, diseased leper, as he was, but he was arrayed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet: He was accompanied with a great retinue; with his presents of gold, silver, and costly apparel. We do not read that he came down out of his chariot, and fell on his knees before Elisha's door, and uncovered his loathsome body, and spread open all his wants before the prophet. No! he came with his reward in his hand (as it were) and set still in his robes in his chariot, and thought thus to recommend himself to the clemency and pity of the man of God. I dare say, he boldly bid his page knock at the door and say, My Lord Naaman is here, and offers thee all these great riches, these changes of raiment, gold and silver in abundance. Come thou therefore and heal him of his leprosy. I suppose the captain would not suffer a dubious thought if he should be accepted or not. Had any body met him, and asked him, How canst thou, who art an enemy to the Hebrews, look for mercy at the hands of their God, or at the hands of his prophet? doubtless he would have answered, True, I am at variance with the seed of Jacob, and have formerly done harm to the house of Israel, but see, I make amends so far as I have power, and will fully satisfy the prophet for all his trouble when he shall have healed me.

Well, he waited at Elisha's door, and expected no common message to be delivered to him, but that some oracle would pronounce him whole, or that the prophet himself would come out to him, and pray to the Lord God of Israel, and then strike

his hand over his sore place, and by a miracle recover him. But instead of this, the prophet took no notice at all of his being a great man, or of his presents, or of his pompous coming, but abode still in the house, and sent out Gehazi his servant to tell him, "Go wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean." This so provoked him, that without much regarding what Gehazi said, he bid his chariot driver turn away, and in anger breathed out the language of his heart, and said, "I thought he would have come out to me, and stand and call upon the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper." What (thought he) have I undertaken so vast a journey, and come so far only to hear that fellow bid me go and wash in Jordan? If washing would have done away the leprosy, I needed not to have come into Israel for water. Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, are not they better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean? And he turned away in a rage.

When he had heard the means of his recovery, see how he slighted it. Because he did not know how the "Lord chuses the things that are weak and base, and things that are despised," to do his will, he reasoned within himself, and thought, if water could take away the leprosy, would not so many learned and wise men as have been in the world have found out that remedy before now? or might not the man, (if water would cure me,) have said to me, Go and bathe thyself in thine own excellent rivers at home, and thou shalt be healed? and while he thus thought, one of the servants came near to the side of the chariot, and besought him, saying, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing," go some long journey, and dip thyself
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in some foreign spring, or do some hard work, or give some great portion of thy substance away for the spices and ointment of the apothecary or merchant, or bid thee buy it with a great sum of money, "wouldst thou not have done it?" wouldst thou not have gladly complied and taken his advice? And Naaman thought in his heart, and answered, "I would, if he had bid me do any thing; if he had said, by works thou mayest be healed; by fasting, prayer, almsgiving, or any work more hard to be done, I would have obeyed." Then said the servant, "How much rather then when he saith to thee, wash and be clean?" These words the Lord graciously set home upon his heart, and he repented of his pride, and self-wisdom, and instead of offering rich presents, arraying himself delicately, &c. he pulled off all his garments, and went down into Jordan just as he was, a poor, stinking, filthy leper: and he no sooner obeyed the voice of the Lord by plunging himself seven times in the waters, but he was changed; he found he was healed, and his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child; immediately he believed in the God of Israel, and returned to the door of Elisha's house, he and all his company, and stood before Elisha, and said, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel; thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offerings, nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord." How happy was it for Naaman that he hearkened to the voice of the Lord by his servant? He not only was washed from the leprosy of his body, but from the unbelief and sin of his soul. He could then truly adore free grace alone; he was convinced it was not of his own will, for he would have gone home to Damascus in a rage, but the Lord freely put it into the little maid's heart first to wish, "Would

to God my lord was with the prophet in Israel, for he would heal him of his leprosy." And when he had rejected the way appointed to be healed, as if the Lord had said to him as he did of Ephraim, "How shall I give thee up?" he yet put it into the heart of one of his servants to go and speak mildly to him to stop him from returning home, by saying to him, "Nay, my father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather then when he ONLY saith to thee, wash and be clean!"

It may be, you who are here, are quite ignorant that you have on a more dreadful leprosy than that which clave to Naaman: Alas! my dear, dear brethren, ye have got the leprosy of sin. I am to-day forced to say to you, as the little maid to Naaman, "Would to God you were with the prophet that is in Israel," I mean the Lord Jesus Christ, "he would heal you of your leprosy." I need not bid my dear hearers go wash seven times, the merit of the seven streams of Jesus are all one: And whosoever once washes there, needs no more sacrifice for sin. Heb. x. 18.

The leprosy was a disease of all others the most to be feared, for other diseases were frequently cured, but this seldom; for which cause the people of Israel were used to put out their lepers from them into desert places, and feed them there, lest they should infect others, Lev. xiii. 46. And the Lord forbid those that had this distemper to come into his congregation, Numb. v. 3. It was a disease that at first broke out in a little white scab, and if not prevented or healed, overspread the whole body, and made them as if a white scurf was upon them. How well doth the description serve to set out sin? It broke out first in Adam in one sin like a scab of the leprosy, and not being stopped, it increased
till

till he was altogether corrupt and infected, till God cast him as it were out of his presence into the earth. Of him were we all, and every one of us have from our birth had this cursed disease, as it is written in David, "Behold, I was shaped in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," Ps. li. 5. I don't doubt but you can answer and say, We know we have this disease of sin, we have felt it often rise in our nature, and spread itself, that the longer we live, instead of growing better we grow worse and worse ; we commit more and more sin every day. O my people, it will spread farther still, till it have ruined you body and soul, if you can't stop it ! Would to God you were with the prophet Jesus, he would heal you, he would make your crimson sins like wool, and your sins that have been like scarlet, whiter than snow. Isa. i. 18. Men are naturally like Naaman, and think that they must bring presents to the Lord, and do a great deal of good before he will heal them ; and this makes some poor souls go bowed down day after day, and mourn, and will not be comforted. Their language is, O ! I am afraid I never shall be saved ! I tremble to think what will become of me if I should die ! I have been a drunkard, an unjust person ; I have lived in fornication, uncleanness and lies ; I have been a sinner all my life time, even from my infancy ; what shall I do to be saved ? O that such would come to the Lord ; he would receive them, he would in no wise cast them out.—But, say they, I am worse than any body, there is not one good thing in me ; I am nothing but sin for my part. Well then, you have the most need of coming to the Son of God, he will make you a new heart and a new spirit, wherein his Spirit shall dwell.—O ! say they, but I have nothing to bring to the Lord ; I can't so much as truly repent for my sin ; my heart is as hard as the nether millstone ; I can-

not pray; I can do nothing. Have you not heard how Naaman, with all he brought, was not accepted, nor made clean, till he stripped himself of all, and renouncing his own wisdom, went down into the river Jordan naked? So must thou, O sinner, go to the Lord, poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. It is written in the scripture, "When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them all." Luke vii. 42.

If thou hadst lived in all form of godliness to this day, and not missed going to church, sacraments, prayers, fastings, &c. once when thou hadst opportunity, in all thy life, yet this would not recommend thee to the Lord any more than all the presents which Naaman brought to Elisha: thou must leave all thou hast, and come stripped and poor to Christ, or thou canst not be his disciple.

Some, when they do good (as they call it) and do not do much harm, but are kind to the poor, and do justice, and refrain from outward gross sins, like publicans and harlots, can go boldly to God, and not fear their going to heaven. Just so did Naaman go to the house of the prophet; but all his good things did not make the man of God so much as come out to him; but on the contrary, he sent out a poor servant to tell him, Go strip thyself, and go wash in Jordan, and thou shalt be clean. Just so I come to-day, to tell you, it is not your self-righteousness, your long roll of good deeds done, will make you to be accepted with my Master. "Publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of God before others," Matt. xxi. 31. Not because they are such, but because these are the more easily convinced of their own poverty of spirit, and having no righteousness of their own to trust in, they more gladly embrace and trust on the righteousness of the Lord Jesus: these also knowing they have much forgiven them, will love the more. You must

must come to our Saviour poor as you are, in your sins and in your blood. Don't desire to cover your sin, and hide you behind the fig-leaves of your own goodness, for so did our first parents, when they had sinned in Eden, and yet escaped not the curse. And so also did Naaman: But if you would be saved, go and fall down by the bloody wounds of Jesus, and there shew all your secret iniquity, lust, pride, covetousness, anger, and unbelief, the chief of all, and wash in that stream, and you shall be clean. Be ye assured it is no works that ye have done, or can do, that will recommend you to the favour of God, as saith the apostle, "Not by works, lest any man boast." Eph. ii. 9. i. e. lest any glory, and say, I have done well, I have lived a good life, therefore I am accepted of God. No; "all boasting is excluded," Rom. iii. 27.

Every one that is saved shall confess, to the glory of Jesus Christ, "Not by works of righteousness that I have done, but according to his mercy he saved me, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Tit. iii. 5. "Not unto me, Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name give glory," Ps. cxv. 1. Yea in heaven no mention is made of what they did who are arrived there, but of what Christ did for them. The blood of the Lamb, which is our only salvation, is there glorified and praised. This is that Jordan where I would beseech my dear brethren (who feel the leprosy of sin is on them) to come and wash. Believing in the Lord is washing." Only "believe, and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 31. Only wash, and thou shalt be clean.

Many here are ready (it may be) to turn away in a rage, and say, What, is this all I come to hear? Believe, and be saved? O! I will never be convinced this is true: do you think that all the good I have done, and all my prayers and cries will avail nothing? If I go constantly to church, and receive the blessed sacrament,

ment, and believe the scriptures, and pray every morning and evening, and do all the good I can, may I not be sure of going to heaven? No; there is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ," Acts iv. 12.

That language, which is almost in every one's mouth, is the same with that of Naaman's. What, saith he, "are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" So say many of you, Are not good works, a scher, honest, and religious life, enough to save us? may we not wash in these, and be clean? 'the Lord points out the only way saying, "I am the way," John xiv. 6. And again, "This is the way, walk in it," Isa. xxx. 21. And one wisely said of Christ, He is so narrow a way, so strait a door, that except you pull off all your cloaths you cannot get in. Our Saviour does not want any of your righteousness. It is in his pure sight but painted iniquity; it is but filthy rags, Isa. liv. 6.

He calls you then only who are poor. "To this man will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is poor," Isa. lxvi. 2. Yea, except you can reckon yourselves upon a level with the worst sinners, murderers, thieves, publicans, you have not seen your nature; you do not know yourselves; and till you do, you can by no means see the want of the dear Redeemer's blood. You will be always striving to make yourselves clean, and when you have strove all your life, find that true which was spoken of the children of Israel, "They followed after righteousness, but have not attained righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by works." Rom ix. 31, 32.

But again, I beseech you hear the word of the Lord, "Your righteousness is of me." And again, "Come to me, and I will give you rest for your soul." Matt.

xi. 28. And again, "I counsel thee to buy of me raiment, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear," Rev. iii. 18. "Buy of me freely without money, and without price," i. e. for nothing, Isa. lv. 1.

Paul, who was born a Jew, gloried as much in this as you do in your being born Christians, but by-and-by he found, 'that he was not a Jew, who was one outwardly," or did like Jews, in outward things, "but he (saith he) is a Jew who is one inwardly," Rom. ii. 28, 29. If you are not christians inwardly, in vain do you make profession of Christ outwardly; and unless you are inwardly washed with the blood of Jesus, by the Holy Ghost, baptism of water is nothing. So except you inwardly live by the merit of the wounds of the body of our Saviour, in vain do you eat and drink in his presence bread and wine. The apostle was "of the seed of Abraham (to whom the promises were made) of the tribe of Benjamin, and lived, as touching the righteousness of the law, blameless," Rom. xi. 1. Phil. iii. 5, 6. Yea he was not only religious, as were others of the strict sect of the Pharisees, but more exceedingly zealous than many of his equals in his own nation and at Jerusalem, Gal. i. 14. But yet all this was not enough to bring him to heaven; all would not do: When he was convinced of his sin, as he was riding to Damascus, he cried out in the bitterness of his soul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Acts ix. 6. Neither did he rest from crying, neither would he eat or drink till Ananias brought him that glorious message (which I now bring you) "Why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sin, calling upon the name of the Lord," Acts xxii. 16." So also it is written of Joshua, the high priest, that when he stood before the Lord in his own righteousness, it was as filthy garments; but when the Lamb of God had said to him, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass away," he had on change
of

of raiment, i. e. the righteousness of Christ, and then he was no more before the Lord as unclean, but clean to a wonder ! So as the angel owned of him and his fellow saints, " Ye are men to be wondered at ! " Zech. iii. His covering was then " the covering of the Spirit of the Lord," Isa. xxx. 1. O may you be covered with this holy vestment, this robe washed white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14.

When Naaman's anger was a little appeased, his servant reasoned with him, as I now do with you. The Lord grant my words may have the like effect with his ! I mean, to win you to come and try the virtue of this blessed Bethesda, the blood of Jesus, this true Jordan. Be not offended, my dear friends, if the Lord does not appear in any miraculous way ; but hear, if he speaks by unworthy me, or sends me to you, as Elisha sent Gehazi to Naaman, to tell you, ye must wash and be clean. Do not answer, What is this stripling ? or how comest thou to be right when so many wise and learned men, after thy sayings, are wrong ? My dear friends, the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and the thoughts of the wisest men before the Lord are vain, 1 Cor. i. 20. And God often chuses to let wise men err in their own prudence, when he reveals his truth to babes, Luke x. 21. Then let not your dear souls turn away in a rage ; but O ! be intreated to go down to the Jordan of Christ's blood : it is better than all the rivers of Damascus. All the cries and tears of every saint in the world cannot wash away one sin ; but O ! one drop of the blood of the Lamb will cleanse you of all, if you have ten thousand thousands, yea if every sin that have been committed by all the children of Adam, since the foundation of the world, (saving the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost) were to be charged upon any one of you, Come, wash and be clean ; there is still room, Luke xiv. 22. The door of the Lord's wounds

wounds is still open, escape hither for your life, my dear brethren.

I do not doubt but many of you are willing to be saved, and if the Lord had bidden you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? Methinks I hear you say, I would, if I knew what the will of the Lord was, I would do it, though I went thro' hell for a time, so that I might but be saved. O poor brethren! you may be saved freely. He only saith to you, wash and be clean.

No sooner had Naaman put off all that fine apparel (which he thought would have moved the prophet to look upon him) and entered the river, but his flesh returned like the flesh of a little child; he found his distemper was taken away, and he came up out of the water whole and rejoicing. So if you could be prevailed upon to put off your own righteousness, lay down your own wisdom, and come to the Lord Jesus, wretched and undone as you are; if you could wholly trust the merits of his blessed blood, and believe on his name, you would find your sin, that hateful leprosy, washed away, and yourselves converted, and made like little children; Matt. xviii. 3. If any of you feel yourselves impure, burthened, yea, though you feel yourselves nothing but sin and uncleanness, how can you stay away? Or how can you doubt your right to wash in this blood, when you may read upon the fountain-head, This fountain was open for sin and uncleanness, Zech. xiii. 1. If you have surely seen your sin, surely you may see the Lamb of God invites you compassionately to wash you in him. The Spirit knocks at your heart, saying, Come. The church, (the people of God, the Lamb's wife) saith, Come: Yea, saith the Lord, let him that heareth consent and say, Come, O my soul, come. "Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water freely," Rev. xxii. 17. At this spring poor weary

sinners may drink and wash them too ; here you may put away the evil of your doings, and make yourselves white as snow. O be intreated! (I beseech you in Christ's stead) and come and try the virtues of this healing spring. You cannot, I know you cannot, make yourselves clean ; the Lord saith, " From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you," Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

When happy Naaman was cleansed, he would have been glad if the whole world could (like him) have proved the power of the God of Israel. So the woman of Samaria (when she had found Jesus, the Fountain of living Waters) left her water-pot by the side of the well, and was for having all the city come and draw water out of this well, Christ. So you (when you have known what it is to have the love of God shed abroad in your hearts) will be of the same mind. O! you will be for telling all your friends and neighbours, what great things the Lord hath done for your souls, and how the Lord hath had compassion upon you. Then (as Naaman after his cure wanted to make Elisha amends) you will desire and long to praise the Lord our Saviour, and to live to his glory in time and in eternity. O that ye may indeed believe, and prove the things I now say are true! May you never, never rest till you can triumphantly say, I am washed, I am sanctified, I am justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, 1 Cor. vi. 11. To him, even the Lamb, God, blessed for ever, be glory and thanksgiving, world without end.

DISCOURSE VI.

THE BLOODY ISSUE HEALED.*

MARK V. 34.

*Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace,
and be whole of thy plague.*

IN the preceding verses the evangelist gives an account of a certain woman, who having been sorely diseased of a bloody issue, and getting no cure elsewhere; at length, hearing of Jesus, came and was healed by him. To whom, after she was healed, the Lord spake these words: "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole," &c. Of these words, and of the manner of her cure, I purpose to speak in particular.

* The following was prefixed to the first edition.

PREFACE TO THE READER.

I have read over the following sermon, and think it plain and scriptural, and sweetly adapted to the capacities of the Poor, for whose benefit it was preached, and is now published. Surely the Spirit of the Lord is upon the author, and the Lord has indeed anointed him to preach the gospel to the Poor. I cannot therefore but own and honour him, though not sent forth by external imposition of hands: and I trust all our young preachers will be enabled to publish some of their discourses, for a testimony to the present, and benefit of future ages. They will judge more impartially, and greedily embrace what many of the present generation will reject. I am,

Courteous reader,
Thy soul's friend and well-wisher.

Brinkworth,
Dec. 19, 1743.

G. WHITEFIELD.

The scripture saith, "A certain woman (perhaps intimating thereby that she was noted in that country) being diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him." She was a remarkable woman because of her disease; and the more so, because she had been twelve years in that case and could get no cure. Doubtless she was almost or quite out of hope of ever being helped; for she might consider how diseases of a few days contraction were easily cured, but old ones are scarce ever removed; they generally accompany people to their graves: I say, she might justly so think, and especially when she had (as we are told) spent all her living upon physicians, and was nothing the better, but rather the worse. Her days were miserable through her malady, and she could have no comfort, because she was without hope of obtaining a cure. She had (I suppose) gone to all the physicians who were famous for doing cures, and it is said she had given them all her substance: it may be, she had even parted with her good apparel, and had nothing but rags to cover her naked and diseased-body; and we may reasonably imagine, that through the continual running of her issue, those rags she might have were so very offensive and loathsome, that no one could look on her but as an object of the greatest pity. If friends had given her clean raiment, it would soon have become unclean and nasty; for her issue kept running, and polluted every thing she put on: but we do not hear she had any friends, nor clean apparel, nor money, nor any thing left; but was a poor, diseased, unhappy woman; the very emblem of a sinner, whose eyes the Lord hath opened to see his fearful estate; and the filthy rags were the perfect picture of self-righteousness. In this sad condition she heard of
Jesus :

Jesus: where, it may be observed, that few rich people ever came to Jesus to be healed, or enquired after him; the reason was, they had money enough to pay physicians, and so they thought they could do without him: too many think so, I fear, among us. When the woman herself had a living, a good estate, &c. she (we do not hear) looked after our Saviour any more than others; but when her all was spent, and she had heard how Jesus had healed people freely, and how he loved the poor and turned none away, she was encouraged to go to him and try what he could do for her: so she came. The Lord often makes affliction and poverty the means of bringing us to himself. He oftentimes strips us of all the idols we have loved, and then we are forced to look to him: so he dealt with the poor woman: he let her go on in her own way a good while, even until she had no more to give to physicians, but was reduced to want and penury, and then the fame of Jesus sounded sweet in her ears. Had any one told her of the Lamb of God while she had money and goods, &c. perhaps she would have answered, It is well that there is so great a friend to the poor who want, but as for me, I have enough to pay my physicians with; I can do without him. It is very likely she had heard of Jesus and his miracles before; but she heard, as many hear now-a-days; they sit under sermons and hear precept upon precept and line upon line, but are never the better: they hear one say what God has done for him; and another tells in his hearing how his sins are pardoned, and how he found the Sun of Righteousness arise upon him with healing in his wings; but all is like water spilt upon sand: the carnal only despise the news, and think the witnesses are mad or in delusion; or, if they can believe or think it true,

it may be their answer is faint, I wish I could say so too; or it may be, I thank God I have no need of seeking after Jesus, as you: I have lived a sober life, and do all the good I can, and am not like other wicked men: I am not in much care about my future state: if I shall not go to heaven, who will? Alas! these do not know their disease, and so do not want a cure: these are they of whom Jesus spake, saying, "I am not come to call the righteous, for they are whole, and think they need not a physician; but I am come to call sinners to repentance, and to heal the broken-hearted."

When the woman came to Christ, she was in the utmost necessity; she had been ailing twelve long years, and so longed for one that could heal her disease; so that I dare say, when she heard of Jesus, her heart leaped for joy; though, when she came she did not run up to him as if he was bound to heal her; no, she went behind him, ashamed of her bloody stinking rags, and was afraid so much as to ask him for mercy; but yet following, believing if she could but touch the border of his garment, she should be made whole; and, as the multitude thronged him, she caught him by the hem of his garment; and as soon as she touched him she felt in herself she was healed. Hearken, my dear brethren, and come (as many as want to be healed) and touch the Lord Jesus too. How did she rejoice when the issue of her blood stopped! How did her heart flow with thankfulness, and praises, and blessings, when she perceived whom she had touched! She knew he was more than mere man; surely she knew he was the Messiah that should come into the world. But scarce had she received so great mercy, but the Lord Jesus turned him about in the press, and asked, "Who touched me?" The enemy then stepped in

in and hurried the poor soul, and tempted her, persuading her she had no right to touch Jesus, and might now justly look for damnation, because she had presumptuously touched the border of so holy a garment with unhallowed hands and stolen a cure, thinking she could do it without his knowledge. What horror seized her at this time! She did not know what to do; and where could she fly from Him who was every where? So the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. She told him how she had been a long time in that bad way, and how she believed if she could but touch his garment she should be cured, and so had ventured, and found herself made whole of her issue of blood. But see and admire the love of Jesus! So soon as she had ended her confession, to ease her of her fears, and to shew her how he is not angry at people's coming to him, he said to her, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." O that the same Saviour may say so to every poor sinner here to-day! Many followed the Lord Jesus as well as the woman; for the apostle saith, "the multitude thronged Jesus;" but we hear of no other there that found any virtue from him, save the woman; she touched him in faith, and was made whole; he therefore saith, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." But of this I purpose to speak more particularly hereafter. Let us apply what has been said already.

Many that are here may have read this account over and over, and yet have seen nothing in it but a relation of a strange miracle wrought by our Saviour on a poor wretched woman. Others, I suppose, have thought while I have been speaking, O I am convinced I am diseased, like the woman; I
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have an issue of blood, have an issue of sin in my heart, and have had it more than twelve years ; I have had it ever since I came into the world. I wish I could be directed what to do to be saved. O my brethren, my dear brethren, I wish all of you knew what need you are in of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is not one of you but have this issue by nature. Ezekiel, when he describes the state of man, as he is brought forth into the world, saith, The Lord looked on him in his blood (meaning his sin) all polluted and unclean, Ezek. xvi. So the Lord looks upon you now ; and though many of you are quite insensible of your lost estate and misery, yet he sees your sin, pities you, and sends me to tell you to-day where is one who will make you whole. Harken therefore every one of you. When you came into the world you were born in sin, corrupt and abominable, and the issue or fountain of sin was opened in your heart, and began running when you began breathing. Many, I believe, can say, with myself, We are witnesses, by sad experience, that these things are so. Many here, I doubt not, have found sin like a bloody issue, and have, day after day, and year after year, strove to stop it and could not ; and when you had spent all your strength and power in going to physicians, were still no better, but rather worse ; it can be said of you, that you have tried all means, and spent all your living. You have gone to friends and told them your trouble, and they sent you to take pleasure, to sing songs, to play at cards, to drink, to ride out and keep company, &c. and many have seemed to get ease this way. Such sort of physicians have been commended by many ; but O ! they only skin over the wound for a season ; by-and-bye the place will break out again, and the last state will be worse than the first. I believe

believe many are in hell now that found such help in such miserable comforters and bad physicians, and are now lamenting how they fooled away their own souls. But do not I hear some say, "I have tried pleasure, and pastime, and company, but O! I am never the better; I have looked to Moses, and strove to do all he bid me; I have fasted and prayed night and day; I have gone to church, given to the poor, read much, and wept and sorrowed, but yet I am overcome by sin; it still runs upon all my duties and defiles them; it stains all my righteousness; it mingles in all my best works; pollutes my most holy services; and instead of getting the victory over it, I grow worse and worse. I strive, and resolve, and make vows, and break all. Books, and sermons, and scripture, afford me no comfort. I fear my wound is incurable; my pain is perpetual; I have no rest day nor night, and my moisture is like the drought in summer. If I seem to be a little sweet, and sin does not rule for a season, it is only like a torrent stemmed up, which anon breaketh down with greater violence and carries all before it. I am ready to say, "there is no help for me in my God, and I have no rest because of my sin." Who art thou that so criest? Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? Jesus came to bring salvation to a distressed people. Draw nigh to mount Golgotha, and take a view of the Lord Jesus dying there for thee. There he pays the price of thy soul, and sheds down that rich blood that hath healed all the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven, and may heal thee. But methinks I hear thee answer, "O I am the worst of sinners, I am the very chiefest of all: I am particularly sinful and diseased." So was the poor woman I have been speaking of; she was very bad, but

but not too bad to be healed. But thou sayest, if any could but see my sin and my rebellious heart, they would be of my mind, and say there is no mercy. Thou judgest right, for with men it is impossible to save or cure a sinner that finds he has no whole part in him, but is full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores; but the thoughts of God are higher than our thoughts, and his ways above our ways, and nothing is impossible with him: is any thing too hard for the Lord? But yet again methinks I hear thee say, "I am old in sin; I fear I am now hardened and given over to a reprobate mind. If I had gone to Jesus when I was young, or a good while ago had I applied to him, then I might have found mercy, but then I was one of them that went to other physicians, and thought I could get to heaven by my own righteousness, and turn and save myself when I would; besides, I remember, some time ago, I had convictions of sin, and was drawn by the Father, but I went on, sinned against light, and now I fear I have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost; and what confirms me in my thoughts of being out of the reach of mercy is, because my sin has been of so long duration; I have had the stinking, filthy, and loathsome issue more than twelve years." My dear fellow sinner, what I have been speaking as the language of thy heart, was a few years ago the language of my own, and I did think I was consigned over to everlasting perdition. I could have as much hope and more for Judas, Esau, Francis Spira, &c. than for myself; I sought to other physicians indeed, viz. delights, plays, &c. to divert my grief; I then attempted by long fasts, and abstinence, and prayers, and tears, and alms, and going twice a-day to church, and praying all day long in private, to stop my issue of sin; but
 alas!

alas! I strove in vain. I was more and more led captive by the devil, and more and more convinced that without Christ I could do nothing. Yet I believed, like the woman, that if I could touch the hem of the Lord's garment, by faith, I should be made whole; and, having been enabled to do so, I bear witness he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and will heal poor sinners of whatever disease they have, when they fly to him for pardon. I know you believe he is able to heal you. Methinks I hear you say, "O that I could but touch the Lord's garment (his righteousness is his garment), I should be made whole, but I doubt his will: if I did but know he loved me, I would give ten thousand worlds." Sayest thou so? O come then to Jesus; and though thou hast despised him and rejected his kind offers and calls, and hast let him pass by thee, yet follow on, and thou mayest yet know the Lord. The diseased poor woman, did not meet, did not cry to Jesus when he passed by, but came behind and followed him, and she did not follow in vain. Here, O poor sinner, thou mayest learn, that if thou hast let our Saviour call thee and court thee in vain before now, and suffered him to pass by and refused to go with him, yet thou mayest go after him and have him turn back and give thee a gracious answer to all thy prayers. So did the spouse in the Canticles, when she had long refused her Beloved entrance into her chamber, and by vain excuses caused him to withdraw, she rose and sought him by night and found him. Up then thou that hast (like me) often refused our Saviour room in thy heart, go behind him weeping, and follow on shewing thy wretched estate, and he will soon convince thee he changeth not, but is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; you will find him turn
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to your complainings, and ready to answer to your earnest prayers. I dare say, when she followed Jesus, and saw what a multitude surrounded him, and how hard it was to get at him, she reasoned within herself and might say, "I may as well go back as forward, for lo! there is no way to him for me." But still she went on, and, as she could, got in among the crowd; and then, according to her faith, was she healed, by touching the hem of the Redeemer's garment. Your thoughts, ye publicans, ye sinners, may be like her's; you may think Whenever I go to pray, I have such a company of evil thoughts and such a multitude of temptations between me and Jesus, that I am often tempted to strive no more. O my brother, my sister, whosoever thou art, be not discouraged; follow after Jesus and say, If I perish, I will perish at the King's feet. But perhaps thou seest that thy bloody issue of sin hath made all thy best deeds but an abomination, and that thy very appearance is an evil savour in the nostrils of the most pure God; and so because thou art so bad and unworthy, thou canst not venture to come. Dear heart! this, no doubt, was the case of this poor woman; she thought her issue was so filthy and unclean that it would offend the nostrils of the Son of God, therefore she came behind him. But she did venture at last; she came, she touched, and was made whole. Let this encourage thee then to come behind Jesus, and to believe that his righteousness may be touched by unworthy thee. None but the ungodly are justified by it; none but the lost perishing soul lays hold on it: who knows, this day the righteousness of Jesus may be revealed in thy heart, and all thy sins washed away by a crucified Saviour's blood.

My brethren, if any of you could now believe in the Lord, and, by faith, draw nigh and touch
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the hem of his garment, you shall be healed, and have the comfort of knowing it also. Some indeed teach that we may be forgiven, and yet not know it; and healed, and yet not be sensible of it; but such doctrine is dangerous, and tends to make men easy where they are, and cry peace, peace, to themselves, when there is no peace. Do not you so learn Christ. Let none here rest till they know they have closed with Jesus, till you can say, with full assurance of faith, that you have touched him; and till Jesus bears witness in your hearts, that virtue is gone out of his wounds to heal you. This woman felt in her body that she was healed of her plague. So you may know and feel in yourselves, even while you are in these bodies, that your souls are healed of the plague of sin. So soon as she touched our Saviour, her issue's bleeding stopped. So likewise, when you believe in Jesus, you shall find the power of sin cease and dry up. Sin shall not reign any more in your mortal bodies. You shall be more than conquerors through him that loved you, and reign over sin and the world, and the devil with him, and be as kings in the earth. You shall then, from experience, believe Jesus to be God blessed for evermore, and become his blessed and happy witnesses world without end.

But it may be you can say, "I believe I was born of God at such a time. I then could call Jesus Christ my Saviour, and was sure my sins were forgiven, but now I doubt and am afraid." Come then, fearing and trembling, to Jesus, and fall down at his dear feet, and shew him all that is done. Tell him you are troubled, lest you have presumptuously touched him without preparation; and I know his answer will be, "Son, be of good cheer; daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath

hath saved thee ; thy faith hath made thee whole ; go in peace."

Too many think they must do a good deal before they can be cured ; they think they must live good lives, and be very strict in their duty, &c. ere they can know their sins are forgiven ; but such err, not knowing the scripture, neither the power of God. Jesus receiveth sinners. He justifieth the ungodly by imputing his righteousness to them ; and whosoever believeth in him (bond or free, male or female, Jew or Greek), shall receive remission of their sins. Jesus Christ wants no other preparation to come to him, but that we be convinced that we are poor, needy, lost, perishing sinners without him. The woman in the text had nothing to recommend her to the Lord's pity but her wretchedness and sin, and yet is she (I do not doubt) at this time a witness of his free grace in the kingdom of heaven. She, when she came, had no good works to plead that 'merited compassion or favour ; but she came quite stripped, ashamed, and very miserable ; and what did she meet with ? Why, with free rich grace, revealed through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ : " Thy faith hath saved thee," saith our Saviour ; not thy works, not thy own good deeds. No, but thy faith hath saved thee ; 'go in peace. O come hither and hearken, ye foolish, and learn wisdom. It is by faith only in Jesus Christ poor sinners get to the redemption which is in him, even the forgiveness of all their sins. By faith alone are the unrighteous brought to God, and by faith only made whole. If any ask how ? I answer, faith is like a plaister spread with the blood of Christ, which heals every disease. Faith in good works, laid to a wounded sinner's conscience, only puts him to more pain. It is like an improper medicine

me laid to a sore; the patient is at no rest till it is taken away. Many sinners despair, and are unhappy and distracted and miserable, because they believe on others beside Jesus. Cruel physicians tell them, you must not think to be saved merely by believing in Christ; you must live a good life, and keep the commandments before you can be healed; and deluded souls believe it true; and so, while they are looking after righteousness and salvation by the works of the law, they are always in bondage and are not healed. O that God may give you to make Jesus Christ the object of your faith, and believe none other can do you good; believe no good work can be done, neither will you be any thing the better, but worse and worse, till you can trust your souls in the Lord Jesus Christ's arms, and fly for refuge, redemption and deliverance only in his precious blood. Whoever believes in his pierced body nailed to the cross for sin, and bruised for his iniquity, and can look to his blood and name as to the fountain opened for his sin and for his uncleanness, shall by his stripes be healed. Many have a dead faith in Jesus that profits not, but few have that faith which saveth the soul: I mean a living faith dipped in the blood of Jesus—a faith apprehending Christ, and laying hold on the hem of his garment. O my brethren, strive for this faith which was once delivered to the saints. Rest not, but follow after Jesus, and cease not to cry, Lord, help my unbelief! till you can say with joy (the Holy Ghost bearing you witness in your conscience), "I believe; yea the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Sit not down till you have found virtue come out of Jesus to heal you: I mean merit from his

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pierced body to make you whole of your plague. When you are made clean and healed by faith in the blood of Christ, you need not desire to be taught of man if you are right or not; the anointing that you have received will teach you, and the Spirit will be your witness that you are made whole. You will find the power and dominion of sin stopped, and you will shew to the world then that you have been with Jesus; by the virtue you have received, you will walk as Christ also walked in the midst of this sinful and perverse generation, among whom, by your good works, you will shine as lights in the world. Yourselves being assured also of your part in Christ, shall pass sweetly the residue of your days, in holiness and righteousness without fear; and wait happy at the feet of the Lamb till he shall send for you to the joyful number upon the mount Sion, where you shall tune your songs to the harpers' harps; and, to the praise of the free grace and mercy of our dear Saviour, you shall sing of his salvation for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE VII.

ST. PAUL'S CONVERSION.

Acts xxii. 16.

And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy Sins, calling upon the Name of the Lord.

WITH these words Ananias concludes his message to Saul. He told him, the Lord Jesus that had appeared to him in the way, had chosen him to be his minister, and would give him an inheritance with those who through faith in him were sanctified, and laying his hands upon him, he received his sight, which had left him at the time of the heavenly vision, and he arose, was baptized, and God revealed his dear Son in him, giving him in that instant remission of sins and the Holy Ghost.

The sudden and glorious manner of this great man's conversion was extraordinary, and is one of the clearest instances of the free-grace and salvation of God. He had been educated a zealous Jew, and his life was according to the strictest order of that religion, but, like many of his time, ignorant of the redemption and of the righteousness of faith; and therefore out of his Jewish zeal a bitter persecutor of the christians, and those who called upon Christ's name. He understood, that the disciples worshipped as the true God the Son of Mary, or, as he was called by way of reproach, the Nazarene,

the Tolah, that is, the hanged one, and that they seemed no more to esteem the righteousness of works as formerly, but made his righteousness their hope and doctrine, and preached salvation, repentance, and remission of sins in his name; and so strove against them with all his might, and went so far as to assist at the murdering of Stephen, to whose death he consented, and kept their cloaths who stoned him. He was born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia; and though a Jew, and the son of a strict Jew, was a free man of the empire. He was taught the languages, and instructed in the Jews' religion at Jerusalem, under the care of a learned doctor of the Pharisees, named Gamaliel, but by trade was a tent-maker. His learning and zeal procured him great favor in the Sanhedrim, and in the court of the high-priest, of whom he obtained authority to search out the followers of Jesus, and to put them in irons; and send them to be punished; and this he did, not only in Jerusalem, but in other parts; and some he caused to be scourged, some he forced to fly their towns and country, and many men and women he haled to prisons, whom he found calling upon the name of Jesus; and some he compelled to blaspheme or deny Christ. The threatening of slaying and putting them to death, and the havock he made daily in every house, made the disciples every where afraid, and his very name struck a terror where it came: so that all but the apostles, who abode at Jerusalem, were scattered abroad because of the persecution. Encouraged by this success, he got again letters of authority, to make an inquisition in the city of Damascus, and to aid and assist him, had procured men, and that very likely of the Roman army, to go with him. Thus far the Lord suffered him, but before he entered the city, he was arrested from
heaven.

heaven. At noon, or middle of the day, a light shone brighter than the sun upon them, and struck all down to the earth; and as they lay, a voice was heard in the Hebrew tongue, which none understood but himself, his companions being either Greeks or Romans, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? and he answered, Who art thou, Lord? and the Lord said, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and affrighted cried out, Lord what wilt thou have me to do? and the Lord said, Arise and go into Damascus, and it shall be told thee what thou shalt do."

All the men saw the light and were also afraid, and they heard the voice, but as it was in another language they understood nothing, and when they had helped up Saul, and he had opened his eye-lids, he found he was blind and could see nothing, and therefore was led into the city to the house of Judas, where he continued in the utmost spiritual distress, and could neither eat nor drink for three days, but abode crying, "Lord, what shall I do?" till Jesus sent Ananias to him with the glad news, that the same Lord that appeared to him on his journey had loved him, and opened for him the fountain of his blood, that he might wash and be clean: "And now, saith Ananias, why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." This he did, and at once received the sight of his bodily and spiritual eyes, and knew he was God's chosen vessel and dear child. I wish to God all that hear me were in the same happy condition!

I have now mentioned what was most material in the life of this apostle till our Saviour met him; but I may not stop here, without making some remarks upon a conversion so very particular, for
thereof

thereof undoubtedly have we such an account, that we may learn much thereby, and be confirmed in our own experience of grace, and in the doctrines of Christ's free mercy.

In St. Paul's strict life and extraordinary zeal before he knew Ananias, we may see how far a person may go, and be a stranger to the right way. For my part, I do not know if any one ever yet carried the matter of self-righteousness farther than he, or was more zealous for the law of God, the religion of his fathers, and works of piety than he. If any could have been saved by works of righteousness which they had done, he would have gone to heaven that way, because therein he exceeded: but he knew by experience that doctrine of Christ, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees you can in no case enter the kingdom of God."

What can be said by any which could not be said of him? and if any might glory, he more: he was a child of Abraham of the tribe of Benjamin, circumcised the eighth day according to the commandment; zealous for the law above many in Jerusalem. After the strictest sect of his religion he lived a Pharisee, and was the son of a pharisee, lived as touching the law blameless, and before God in all good conscience. Religiously attached to the traditions of the fathers he fasted twice in the week, gave alms of all he possessed, and was not an ignorant person, or a man that wanted a capacity to judge in divine matters, but was on that account famous in the church, and in favour with the chief priests and elders. Perhaps if he had lived in our times he would have been canonized and reputed a saint; and no doubt, his acquaintance, and such as knew him, thought him such, and when they saw such a pious and religious man in trouble of mind about his soul, and

saw him weep and cry day and night, and not eat or drink, doubtless they thought, poor Saul is delirious, he is gone beside himself, much learning, or much religion, hath made him mad. Would to God all who hear me were like him, notwithstanding all the good opinions they have of themselves, till they knew a better righteousness than all his!

As soon as our Saviour had called to him, and his heart was awakened, he saw all he had done was nothing, "and counted it all dung and dross that he might win Christ and be found in him, not having his own righteousness which was of the law, but the righteousness which is through faith in Christ."

With all his knowledge and zeal, and boast of belonging to the ancient, and then the only church of God, what good did it do him? he did not yet know if he should be saved. All the vain and high thoughts of being righteous or holier than another, or being of the best and purest religion, strictness of life, and performing many duties; without the conviction in the heart that yet we are poor, vile dust and ashes, and must be saved through mere mercy only, serves to exalt the proud nature, and teach them to persecute. The most shocking scenes of persecution that have ever been seen, have been carried on by people who were zealous and fiery for their own way, but such as did not know the meek spirit of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, "who came not into the world to destroy men's lives, but to save them." It was the rigid opinion St. Paul had of the Jews being only right, that made him so hot against the Christians; and it is remarkable our Saviour took all as done to him. "Whoso touches his saints, touches the apple of his eye. What they do to them is done to him, and it would be better to have a milstone hanged about one's neck and be drowned in the depth of the sea, than offend one of the little ones who believes in him."

him." I have observed often, when some persons who are self-righteous and conceited about their own way, have gone so far as to persecute, at once they do not know what they do : they forget all humanity, good manners, kin or affinity, and can be barbarous and cruel without mercy. Thus was it with our apostle ; he scourged people in the synagogues, drove fathers and mothers from their families and homes, and was properly a murderer, and had a hand in Stephen's death. Oh ! may the Lamb of God keep us in his lamb-like spirit, that when we go out in his warfare, our weapons may be never any other than spiritual, such as meekness, love, mercy, intreaties, faith, and patience : " so shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven."

The Lord suffered St. Paul to come nigh Damascus, and I do not doubt all who loved not the disciples began to triumph over them, and tell them, now soon their religion would be at an end ; and it would have been so if Jesus himself had not been the rock and chief corner-stone of their building, and against which he had said, " the gates of hell shall not prevail." Let not any then, however few in number, or mean, or threatened, or persecuted, be afraid : their strength is to sit still, and they shall see the Lord's salvation. He shall fight their battles, the Captain of our salvation shall go before them, and be their reward. Fear not them that can kill the body, and after that can do no more ; nor be startled and offended if the world should oppose and blaspheme ; no, though the kings of the earth stood up, and the princes took counsel together. The cause is the Lord's. It is not of the world, for then the world would love its own. Be therefore quiet, and be ready to lose all, and to be rejected of all men, for yours is the kingdom of heaven. Comfort yourselves when even your masters and relations should be

be against you, and think, "When my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up." So persecuted they the prophets which were before you. The apostles and disciples of Jesus, and all the noble army of martyrs, went that way to their rest.

I observed before that Paul came nigh to Damascus; and just before he entered the city gates, a light from heaven struck him and his company to the earth. How justly might the same hand have struck him to hell? Mercy, free mercy alone ordered it thus; while he lay upon the earth in a fright, Jesus spoke to him. It is his way to bring down before he exalts, and he "was set for the falling and rising again of many in Israel." He first smites the heart, overturns all the self-righteousness, and whatever we counted good in us, and does by us as he did once by Ezekiel, he leads us (as it were) into the deep recesses of the wicked heart; and shews us all our sinfulness, sets in order before us all we had done amiss, and says, "Come, and I will shew thee greater abominations than these;" and asks us, "Why persecutest thou me?" Thus he spake to Paul, as if he had said, What harm have I done to thee that thou art mine enemy; why dost thou fight against me, why persecutest thou me? Think, ye drunkards, ye swearers and liars, ye whoremongers and adulterers, as if Jesus spoke them to you. Think how he looks grieved upon you, as he did once upon poor cursing and swearing Peter, and asks you, "Why persecutest thou me?" why dost thou crucify me afresh, and put me to an open shame? Attend to him, be sorry, and go and weep bitterly before him, and be forgiven.

As soon as our Saviour spoke, it went through Paul's heart. He thought before he was defending God's true religion, but now was in the greatest confusion, nor knew who it was that thus spoke; and

and therefore asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" Here we may see, with all his religion, he did not know God, but was an entire stranger to the Lord that bought him. Our Saviour did not say to him, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of your fathers; for then Paul had answered, Lord, I am not persecuting thee, I am only opposing one Jesus and his followers, who is worshipped among them instead of thee. I am only engaged in thy cause against this new religion: therefore said the Lord, I am Jesus, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." If he was affrighted before and astonished, now he must tremble every limb, and be ready to sink into the earth with terror. Yes, for now he knew that Jesus was the Lord: that the despised Son of the carpenter at Nazareth, who lately hung like a felon upon the tree, and died in such shame and torture, was God over all! and then, like a poor sinner, he made his first right prayer that ever he made in his life, and said to that Jesus he had so abhorred and hated, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" Methinks I see him lift up his trembling hands, and with floods of tears beg for mercy. He was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but sunk under the conviction, and strove no more. It should seem by our Saviour's saying, "it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," that he had done much of it against the tender rebukes and checks of the Holy Spirit, and the pricks of his own conscience. Whoever so acts shall find it hard indeed, for they will bring such calamities and distresses upon their own poor souls as no creature can form an idea of, but him that does it. Not perhaps at the time they do so, for God's Spirit appears grieved and retires off, but the end shall prove he is stronger than we, and "If a man will not turn, he will whet his sword,
and

and bend his bow, and send out his arrows against the persecutors," which shall pierce to the very heart and reins.

This is also to be observed, that the Lord spake to Paul in a language none knew but himself; just so when God's word, like a two-edged sword, speaks to a sinner in his sins, he understands, but perhaps many may be with him at the time and understand nothing about it, but wonder at his fears and concern, and persuade him there is nothing, "Be of good cheer;" but he is too sure of the contrary, and will never rest till, like Matthew when Jesus called him, he rises up, leaves all, and follows him.

Our Saviour had bid Paul go into Damascus, and promised him, "there it shall be told thee what thou shalt do." It seems he had hitherto lain still, and was waiting with an aching heart to see if Jesus would not cause the earth next to open her mouth and swallow him up and let his soul go quick down to hell. But now he arose and was led blind into the city, where his grief and concern was so great, he could not be comforted, nor persuaded to eat or drink for three days, but continued praying to our Saviour, and saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? What shall I do to be saved?" So long God heard from his holy temple his cries, and so long suffered his tears, but now becomes his Saviour.

He did not immediately preach his mind to him, but would have him hear it from a man like himself; so the angel did not tell Cornelius what he should do, but bid him "send for Peter, who should tell him words whereby he should be saved." This is to teach us not to despise the foolishness of preaching, for thereby the only wise God has decreed to save them that believe; nor to slight his ministers, they are poor and weak men, and are properly but vessels

of earth ; but they are God's ambassadors, they are his messengers of salvation.

To one of these, namely Ananias, " a devout man according to the law, and of good report among the Jews," but now a disciple, the Lord appeared in a certain manner, and bid him go to Saul of Tarsus, in the house of Judas, and in such a street, and shew him his salvation. Ananias was afraid to do this, so great a terror had Saul's name struck to him, and therefore said, " Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he has done to thy saints in Jerusalem ; and here has he authority from the chief-priests to bind all that call upon thy name." But the Lord quieted his servant, and allayed his fears by telling him, " He is my chosen vessel, and shall bear my name to the Gentiles, and to kings, and the children of Israel." And hastens Ananias away, saying, " Behold he prayeth !" As if he had said, My child make haste, for his cries have reached mine ears, and I cannot longer withstand his tears and prayers. Behold he prayeth ! I must help him. This day will I shew him my salvation. And now Ananias came and found him out, and begun thus, " Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, has sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." I dare say as soon as Paul heard Ananias call him brother, the tears gushed out of his eyes afresh, and he might think, O how unworthy am I to be called a brother, who have persecuted and wasted the church of God ! But yet it must comfort him at the same time to hear, for all his sin, the Lord would yet become a Father to him, and Jesus would count him among his brethren. Also as the Lord had revealed himself to him on the way by his new name, so Ananias begins his message with the doctrine of Christ's divinity, saying,

ing, "The Lord, even Jesus, has sent me" to thee. This was joyful news, this was glad tidings indeed to a soul in his condition, ready to perish and without comfort, that Jesus the Lord had sent to him. While Ananias spoke and delivered his errand he laid his hands upon Paul, and immediately his sight was restored, and the light of the day, and the light of the Sun of righteousness at once rose upon him. Then Ananias spoke to him after this manner, And now brother Saul, Jesus has set before thee an open door into his kingdom. He loves thee, and will make thee his minister and witness; This day shalt thou see his salvation and be filled with the Holy Ghost. His arms are now open to embrace thee, and his precious blood to wash thee, "Why tarriest thou! Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." And he joyfully arose and was baptized, and received the blessed witness in his heart, that Jesus loved him and had given himself for him. Thus shall it happen to all that call upon the name of Jesus in faith, and none shall pray to him in vain.

I have now related some of the most weighty circumstances of St. Paul's conversion, and also made some remarks which I thought needful; I come now to speak of the text, and to bring that good news to you which Ananias brought to him.

The Lord, even Jesus, sends me with a commission to preach the gospel of repentance and remission of sins to you. He is your Saviour, he has loved and died for you; his wounds like fountains, have been hewn and cut open for you; his blood and sweat streamed down like a river to make you clean, and he and his Spirit invites you to come and wash. "And now why tarry ye? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord."

There is this idea in the text, this divine purport

and meaning, All things are ready : A redemption is obtained : A kingdom is purchased ; up, and take possession. It is as if the Lord said to you, Ye are sinners, poor perishing and undone sinners, but I have prepared a salvation for you : A remedy as great as the disease : A salve as great and broad as the sore. I have opened a healing bath, come and be baptized ; I have opened a fountain for sin and uncleanness, waters which shall satiate your thirst after righteousness, streams that shall overflow and blot out the hand-writing, the threatenings and curses that were against you : Floods that will wash away your sins, and cleanse the heart, the soul, the mind, and make a full end of all your iniquities ; wherefore then do ye linger, or why do ye tarry ? Call upon my name, call upon me your Jesus, your Lord, " and I will hear you, and deliver you, and ye shall glorify me."

" Arise," that is, lift up your hearts to the Redeemer ! Lift up your eyes to the hill Calvary, whence cometh your help. See him with outstretched arms interceding for you ; see him ready to embrace and bless you ; read your names in his hands, the iron pens graved them there ; see his raw back which has carried your burdens, his sore and aching head which has carried away the curse of the ground, and above all see how he has loved you ! " Arise," hang down and droop thy head no more as if no balm was in Gilead, or as if there was no physician there that could heal thee ; though thou art a poor prodigal child, and hast been feeding upon the husks, the pleasures and vanities of a sinful world, thou hast a Father that loves thee, arise and go to him. Thou hast a dear Saviour whose wounds will heal thy spoiled and poisoned nature. Thou hast the Holy Ghost, who will lead thee and comfort thee as a mother comforteth her only son. " Arise,"
leave

leave thy sins, thy lusts, thy dangerous place, and venture to come to the sinner's refuge, and it shall go well with thee.

"Be baptized," be immersed and covered in the bloody sweat of Jesus; be baptized with the baptism wherewith he was baptized; those great drops which fell from him in his agony shall wash away thy great crimes and frightful offences. Hast thou not been already baptized with water in his name, but since "gone like a dog to his vomit, and as a swine that was washed to her wallowing in the mire?" Now come and let the great Apostle and Bishop of our souls baptize thee "with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

"Wash away thy sins, that is, come to the blood of the Lamb. No Jordan, no pool of Siloam, no Bethesda is like it. If you had wept over your sins bitterly like Peter, or Magdalene, or David, and added to it the blood of ten thousand rams and bulls, and even all the blood of the martyrs, yet your deep inbred sin would remain like scarlet-in-grain, nothing would be able to cancel or wash it away, but one drop of the blood of God's Son, Jesus, shall cleanse you from all sin in a moment, and this was really shed for you. The sole aim our Saviour had in dying and bleeding was to open a river of life in his blood for you. Whoever comes to this laver, to this fountain, though his sins were more than the hairs of his head, or the sands upon the sea-shore, all shall be washed away and remembered no more: and though his crimes were the most vile and abominable, so that his heart failed him, yet the blood of Christ shall make him whiter than the snow in Salmon, and soften and melt his hard and icy nature, and speak peace and pardon to his guilty conscience.

"Calling upon the name of the Lord," this is to direct you where to apply, to whom you may address yourselves and make your requests, namely, to the

Lord Jesus that appeared to Paul in the way. He is the Friend of sinners. He is the Minister of the true sanctuary, who hears prayer, and has the tenderest heart. Ask of him and he will give you, seek to him and you shall find, knock at that door of the sheep-fold, and you shall find entrance by the new and living way of his flesh and blood, into the holiest place of all.

I do not doubt but when Paul was a Jew, he had prayed like the other Pharisees, often, and made long prayers, but the scripture takes no notice at all of their being heard or regarded, but as soon as he turned to our Saviour and applied to him, he made haste to help him. So soon as blind Bartimeus called upon his name, he stood still and could not go on till he had shewed him mercy; so the Syrophenician woman, the lepers, the dying thief, when they sought to him, found mercy at his hands, and are witnesses that "whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus shall be saved."

Jesus himself bids us ask of him, his prophets and apostles press the same thing, and we find all the primitive church, from Stephen, calling upon his name. Let then such as doubt his divinity pray to others, and be ashamed to sue for mercy to one who hanged on a tree: let them tire themselves and labour in vain, who call on another name, but let us who are called by the name of our Lord God Christ Jesus, call in faith, and feel and know there is no God that can deliver like our God. Amen.

DISCOURSE VIII.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

JOHN x. 14.

I am the Good Shepherd.

WHOEVER is acquainted with the scriptures know, that in all ages the Lord has been called the Shepherd of his people, and his churches have constantly been looked upon as his flocks. He led Israel through the wilderness like as a shepherd his flock; "he led them like a flock of sheep, by the hands of Moses and Aaron." This was said of him of old, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall carry the lambs in his bosom, and gently lead them that are big with young." And again, "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock, in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered. I will feed them in a good pasture; they shall lie in a good fold. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God." In the days of Israel's journey through the lands of the desert they were led indeed like sheep, and the tender care of God over them was like that of a shepherd, and their whole journey from Egypt to Canaan became like the rest of the Jewish æconomy, a shadow of some better thing, namely, the Saviour's

Saviour's pastoral care over poor sinners, who from the time of their leaving the garden of Eden had wandered like sheep in the wide world, and were lost. "All we, like sheep, had gone astray, we had turned every one to his own way; then the Lord humbled himself to be the Shepherd, and sought us out according to the prophecies which I have mentioned; and as he brought out his chosen people, and Israel his elect, from their bondage in Egypt like a flock, with a high hand and with a stretched-out arm, so did he find us groaning under the iron yoke of sin and bondsmen to Satan, when he came into our spiritual Egypt, where he also was crucified, and there with his hands stretched out he obtained and wrought our deliverance, "and, like a good shepherd, laid down his life for his sheep;" and now has he his church like a flock who are following their shepherd, and returning out of all countries and places back to the mount Sion with everlasting joy upon their heads; and though all do not go up in the same company, nor perhaps will till the last days, yet are we but one fold and under one Shepherd.

The time would fail me to speak much of his tender dealings with this ancient people; how he watched them and led them as a shepherd, nor overdrove his flocks, nor suffered them to mingle with others, but was round about them with his everlasting arms like a wall of fire, to make them lie down and rest safely; or how he fed them from above with manna, and clave and dug springs for them in the rock, of which Moses and the Psalms are full. But I will mention something of David, who was one of the chiefest types of Christ, and by whose name (to signify he should be his very flesh and blood) our Saviour is so frequently called in the prophets.

David

David was once a Shepherd, as Moses had been, before God took him from watching the ewes to lead his people, and both these shepherds had perhaps learned, in their office with their flocks, many things necessary for their higher office, when they became shepherds of God's own purchased flock, the souls of men; and thus the apostles the same, for their toil and waiting in all seasons and weathers to catch fish, was helpful to them when Jesus made them fishers of men. But in David this especially was remarkable, that when he was keeping his father's sheep there came a lion and a bear and took a lamb out of the flock. Now he did not fly in the danger, nor slight the loss because it was but a lamb, (for he might have thought, it is but one, and it is better twenty lambs be carried away than I risque my life, but he thought otherwise); no, he pursued the lion and the bear, and when they rose against him, he slew them, and took the lamb away, and brought it back safe. Herein is value for his sheep, his care of his father's flock, and his bravery, were evident; and this made him a lively picture of his God and Son our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this manner our Saviour, in a certain parable, speaks of the salvation: he saith, A shepherd who had a hundred sheep and lost one, left the ninety and nine in the wilderness; and went out to seek that he had lost, and did not end his search, or give up his care and return, till he had found it, and then he laid it upon his shoulders and brought it home rejoicing. Afterwards he acquainted all his friends and neighbours of it, namely, that he had found the sheep that he had lost, and was more glad about that one than of all the rest that went not astray. This he spake of himself, for he is that good Shepherd who kept his Father's innumerable
flocks;

flocks; and when the devil, like a roaring lion, had seized one, namely, the human race, which, however great in our eyes, to him must be only like one lamb out of an hundred, and less, since all the nations of the earth to him are like a drop of the bucket: he did not think, 'Tush! it is only one lamb, it is but one world, I can make me many with a word speaking; nor did he slight his loss and let it pass unheeded, as if it was far better for ten thousand worlds to perish than he to venture his life and undergo pain and danger; no, he arose from his everlasting throne willingly, and so infinitely he valued us, so faithful was he to his Father's flock, and so tender and loving to us that were lost, that he left all the worlds above, parted as it were with the ninety and nine, and came a far journey of thirty years and upwards, and when he had found us, we were in the mouth of the lion and in the paw of the bear, torn, and polluted and spoiled, and not worth his notice, yet he attacked the enemy and in righteousness made war; he wrestled till his sweat was like great drops of blood falling down to the ground; nor did he give over till he had no whole part, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, but was bruised and sore smitten in body and soul: nor yet did he yield till in his last dying pangs he caught the bear, death, as it were by the beard and slew him, and as he poured out his soul, he trod with such violence on the lion and the dragon, that had deceived the nations so long, that he gave up his prey, and our Shepherd cried out for joy, "It is finished!" and immediately took a part of his spoil (the soul of one of the thieves) with him into paradise, and bid all his angels and saints rejoice with him, for now, saith he, "I have found that which I had lost." Yea, he rejoiced more, and there

there was more joy in the Holy Ghost and among the angels of God over this redemption, this saving his lost sheep, than over all the rest of his vast eternal creation beside. All the heavens from that time to this ring with it, Now is come salvation! now the kingdoms of the earth are again become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ! Thus has he merited that great name among his churches, "The Good Shepherd that giveth his life for the sheep."

It will be proper now to speak of the sheep whom this shepherd has redeemed; of the fold in which they enter and are kept; and in what manner they are gathered and brought home to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls: and this I will do first of all, and then speak of some other things mentioned in this chapter out of which I have chosen my text.

In the fall, all had been so ruined and spoiled, and had so lost their first make and nature, that none properly should be called sheep but such as are restored and washed again, and healed by the Shepherd of Israel. Somewhat of the nature of sheep we all have, namely, an inclination to wander, and a being easily frightened and driven farther and farther from our right place; and as sheep, when one at their head breaks bounds and goes astray, all the rest follow; so have we done from our youth up; "we have erred and strayed from his ways like lost sheep." But the innocence and harmless nature, the love to the Shepherd, &c. we have not till our nature is changed by the Holy Ghost.

Those called by our Saviour his sheep, are believers, people who follow him, who hear his voice, who know him, on whom is his mark, who enter the fold by him, and to whom he gives eternal life; they

they hear his voice. Although all the children of God love the scriptures, and hear joyfully the preaching of the gospel, yet this is not what our good Shepherd means. Many heard him in the days of his flesh, as Herod heard John gladly, who nevertheless, as he tells them, did not hear his voice. To hear his voice, is to have him speak to our hearts, and awaken us out of our dead and carnal state, as it is written, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of man and live." He teaches them they are lost and undone, so that they confess it from a certain knowledge and feeling of it inwardly, and no man can persuade them it is not so. Should one try to convince them that they are not so bad, or in a lost or dangerous condition by nature, it would be to them the voice of a stranger, they would not follow it, for they hear not the voice of strangers. But neither is this all, for they hear the voice of their Beloved. He who seemed to speak roughly, like Joseph to his brethren, when he awaked them out of their sinful sleep, he also speaks comfortably like him, and falls on their neck and kisses them. He speaks in the right time, in the time of love, and calls them, saying, Ye are mine? your sins are forgiven. From the time that we live through faith in him, we hear his voice, we understand his mind, he writes it in our hearts, and there speaks and communes with us; and who is a stranger to this, he must not imagine himself of the sheepfold of Jesus Christ.

"His sheep follow him." He putteth his own sheep forth, and he goeth before them, and they follow him. This is part of the parable with which our Saviour began this discourse, and is not so easy to be understood by people in our nation, because with us it is seldom seen that the shepherd goes

goes before his sheep, but generally after them. In other countries where there are wolves and beasts of prey, the shepherds watch their flocks all night, and are so continually with them and so familiar, that the sheep naturally keep near him, and should he go forward, they do too; or does he stop, so do they; and this the shepherd learns the sheep to do, so that, without driving, they can lead their herds in and out of the fold, and into the pastures easily.

Jesus has taught his sheep this lesson. He has so watched over his flock, that, as Jacob said once, "The sun burnt him by day, and the frost consumed him by night, when he watched his father Laban's flocks;" so is it true of the good Shepherd. He has laid down his life to save theirs, and has not behaved like an hireling, who flees when he sees a wolf coming; but he has been their Saviour, and they love him, and his life becomes an example to them, that they may tread in his footsteps: they are of a tender conscience, and afraid to do any thing without the Shepherd; they walk where he walked, and go out after him bearing his reproach; and as he was, so are they, like lambs among wolves in this world. They follow him. Natural men can see at what they are aiming, and must own they are followers of the Lamb, and shall follow him about whithersoever he goeth.

They cannot live impure, or careless, or sinful lives; the Shepherd did not go that road, neither will they.

They know him. "I know my sheep, he saith, and am known of mine."

They have obtained like precious faith with the saints gone before, and have the Spirit of Christ in them. They know who Jesus is; they are not afraid to call him Lord; they have experienced his

almighty power and salvation, and know in whom they believe. He is their own dear God and Saviour, and his eternal life is theirs. This he gives to all believers: "He that believeth, hath everlasting life, and this is life eternal, to know thee the true God." All his people know him, from the least of them to the greatest of them. This high attainment, this blessed length to which they have arrived, so as to be acquainted with God and at peace with him, has not been through any deep study, or uncommon knowledge, or parts or learning in them ("for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light," and babes and little children is the name our Saviour gives them) but it is given to them from above; they have been taught it of God; Jesus has manifested himself to them.

His mark is upon them; his name is upon their foreheads. As a shepherd, when he has found his lost sheep, puts his name and mark upon them, so does the great Shepherd of the sheep; "but it is the secret of God, the new name written, which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it." They have a secret inward assurance that the Beloved has "sealed them, and that their names are graven upon his hands, and set as a seal upon his arm." Of this the Holy Ghost witnesses to them, and they being "sealed to the day of redemption," rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. No man can "pluck them out of the Shepherd's hands." He has charged every destroying angel, "Come not near any man on whom is my mark." The blood of sprinkling is upon their door-posts, the destroyer must pass by and do them no harm: this keeps them a quiet and peaceable people; this comforts them amidst many misfortunes and troubles;
surely

surely can they say, "I am the Lord's; his name is upon me."

"They enter into the sheepfold by him." They know how they came among the children of God; they were not born so; they did not come in by having had Abraham to their father; nor did they merit it by their holy life, or purchase it with their alms, but by means of Jesus Christ they entered in; he opened his arms, and they took refuge there; he set open his blood, and they washed there; the veil of his flesh was rent, and they escaped by that new and living way. Had not he stood their friend, they had continued "without among the dogs, and fearful and unbelieving to this day." He became an open door to them, and they entered in and were saved by him.

"He gives them eternal life." This I have spoken of before, for this is to know him, and the very life he lived, the very eternal life he has, who was dead and dies no more, they have also, and shall never die; their bodies may lie down wearied in the chambers of the graves and upon the bed where he lay, but farther hurt they shall not, they cannot sustain. Their souls cannot die, they cannot taste of death; no bitterness or sting of death shall grieve or trouble them at their departure; they shall live in time and in eternity: "because Christ, who is their life, lives, therefore shall they live also."

I shall now speak of the sheepfold, "where he causes his sheep to lie down at noon," as Solomon speaks, or "where they dwell alone safely." This is the church of God; for though others have always mingled with his people, and perhaps every visible troop or congregation is a mixed company, yet he has a fold invisibly. His arms surround his flock, and "as the hills stand round about Jerusalem,

saalem, so the Lord standeth round about his people from this time forth for evermore." He that knows the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names, he knows his sheep, and "in the day when he counts up his jewels will spare them, as a man spares his son that serves him." He leads them often out into green pastures, and feasts them upon the hidden manna. They discern the Lord's body, and partake of the droppings of the sanctuary, and drink of "that river which makes glad the city of God." Though others don't know them, or who they are, yet they know, and when any danger is nigh they hasten into the fold, and lie down in the wounds of the Shepherd, whose bleeding hands stretched out, like the wings of an eagle, are the walls of the fold, and all round wait the ministring spirits and armies of the Lord of hosts. Shepherds there are also under the chief shepherd, who are not hirelings, but who feed the flock which God purchased with his own blood; "these minister within the fold, and watch and help the flock till the Shepherd eases them of their office, and suffers them to enter where the mixed multitude are no more, but all are sheep round about their Shepherd.

The general way in which the shepherd gathers his flock, is by the preaching of his gospel; but herein the Holy Spirit is the chief, if not the only minister, and is not confined to any means. He draws and selects, out of all lands and nations, souls for our Saviour; he gives them ears to hear his voice. He makes them "a willing people in the day of his power," and leads them obediently to follow the Lamb: He manifests and reveals Christ and his love to them, so that they know him: he sets the mark upon their foreheads, and "he seals them to the day of redemption." He directs poor, distressed, and miserable people to enter
in

in by Jesus and be saved; and it is he that inspires them with life eternal.

But, beside all that I have said, this must be observed, that there is no way to become a child of God, or to enter his sheepfold, but by the door of Christ. Whoever attempts to make himself righteous, or to attain salvation, or to go to heaven any other way, are like such as enter not the house by the door, but break in some other way, and are thieves and robbers, and so shall God treat all such as strive by other means to come to him.

Again, we must learn from such men who have crept into the ministry for a morsel of bread, men "who preach for hire and divine for money," or, as our Saviour calls them, Hirelings, that though "they care not for the sheep, but feed themselves and not the flock," yet we have a good Shepherd to whom we can apply safely, one "who lays down his life for the sheep." And since such men as I have mentioned are in all places, let it teach us therefore not to slight all, or despise the holy office of labourers in God's vineyard, but let us "count them worthy of double honour who rule well," and cleave the closer to our only High-priest and Pastor Jesus, and put no confidence in any other.

Again, there is yet another doctrine to be mentioned, and that is, that our "good Shepherd laid down his life willingly." He was not obliged or forced. "He had power to lay it down; or, if he pleased, he had power to take it again." The offering himself to die for his people, and desiring "the sword to smite him, the Shepherd, for the sheep that were scattered," was his free love. "He was a free-will-offering." His mercy only led him on, and therefore does his Father love him, therefore do his sheep love him, and shall for ever and ever.

But now how happy must they be who have a part in his favour, "who are his people and the sheep of his pasture?" How safe, who have his Father to take care that "no man shall pluck them out of his hands?" How great mercy is it that he invites us all into his grace; and has spoken all his parables with this view, that lost men might turn to "the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, and be numbered with his saints in glory everlasting!" May you all, my dear brethren and sisters, be wise, and join with the little flock over which he is the universal Overseer and only Head and Lord, and obtain of him the assurance and confidence that "the Lord is your Shepherd, so shall ye not want!"

To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

AN HYMN.

1. **THE** Lord, my Shepherd, he
 So careful is of me,
 That I shall lack no more,
 Or mourn that I'm so poor;
 No; now I quiet am,
 I'm rich, I have the Lamb.
2. In pastures ever green,
 The spotless Nazarene
 His child shall gently lead;
 And I shall freely feed
 On meat indeed, and wine,
 Drain'd from himself, the vine.

3. By

3. By rivers still and deep
Shall I my vigils keep ;
His word my staff shall be,
When bow'd with misery ;
When weary, I may rest
On my dear Shepherd's breast.
4. In heat, the cross is made
For all the sheep a shade ;
There under they get all,
More safe than in a stall ;
No thief or robber there
May any time appear.
5. Salvation, as a bound,
Environs us around :
This keeps the fold secure,
The Lamb stays at the door,
That no disturbing sin
May ever enter in.
6. Before the sheepfold's gate
I often see him wait ;
His ensign in his hand,
His fleece with crimson stain'd ;
Thus tenderly defends
The Shepherd all his friends.
7. When in this posture I
The Lamb of God descry,
I fall on both my knees,
And my Beloved praise,
Who keeps me safe and sure,
Nor do I care for more.

8. I trust me to his care,
And bid farewell to fear ;
Because I this believe,
I can no harm receive,
But out of danger am,
Protected by the Lamb.

DISCOURSE IX.

THE BEST FOUNDATION.

MATT. vii. 24.

Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock: and every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

THIS is the conclusion of our Saviour's sermon upon the mount, and serves to teach us how careful we should be to have our hope of eternal life well-grounded, and our foundation laid sure, lest in a time of trial we should fail, and all our Christianity and religion, like a structure ill-founded, should totter and fall, and leave us miserable for ever and ever.

This has certainly been the sad case with many, who in their life-time would have it they were well enough, were angry if any did but venture to question their safety, their knowledge in the mystery of godliness, or experience of grace, till perhaps the stroke of death, or the near approach of eternity

eternity shook their building, and they felt with horror and distress, that they had only built on sand, and with all their boasts and false righteousness, have trembled to see all fall, and vanish away as the smoke out of the chimney.

In this weightiest of matters we cannot be too secure and safe; let us therefore consider the words of our Saviour, and learn of him, who built all things, to lay our foundation on a rock, that none of the dangers he mentions may come nigh us, and that in his day we may be called wise, and be found worthy, when heaven and earth shall flee away and be shaken terribly, to stand before the Son of Man.

I know how very ready many assertors and propagators of the doctrine of our own righteousness are, to make this text serve them; for, say they, The wisdom of the good builder consists in his having done all our Saviour's sayings, and not in hearing or believing only; and hereby some unwarily can be brought to doubt of the true doctrine of free justification through the grace and righteousness of Christ, and so build with the untempered mortar of their own works and merits, till the day of trial, and then all must fall, and great shall be the fall of it, for body and soul shall fall into hell, yea all, whatever is not built upon Christ and his merits, shall not stand; all else is sand, however specious and good in men's eyes, and so shall be found in the day of judgment.

In this discourse of our Saviour's, one thing is to be observed, and that is, that lest, amidst all his precepts and instructions (of which this sermon is full), his disciples should misunderstand him, and think their best obedience to these should be the ground of their acceptance with God, he says, "but first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness,

teousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," Matt. vi. 33.

As if he would have said, " My disciples, I have now spoken my mind, and what also is my Father's will: After this manner should you think, and thus speak, behave, live, and do; but then be wise, and like a builder who is going to build, he first digs deep and finds the rock, and then lays his foundation sure, and builds safely; so ye first seek the kingdom of God that is in you, and his righteousness. This is your rock and foundation; before all things get this, and you shall build safely; all other blessings shall be given you over and above, but till you have found this you are not right; and should you go on to build, you would be like foolish men, who without a foundation build upon the sand. Ye hear my sayings, do as I bid you; first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness; for many will hear these sayings of mine and go away; first they will attempt to do works in their own strength, and so make a righteousness of their own, and dream of having my righteousness to help out and make up the deficiency of theirs, and so without a foundation, build upon sand, and have all they do fall and burn up in the day that shall try all them that dwell upon the earth."

Our Saviour will not let a piece of his new cloth, his righteousness, which is everlasting and without fault before the throne, and which was wrought out and finished with so many years of pain and labour, go to mend our old garment, or patch up the filthy rags of our righteousness. He that cannot and will not trust the obedience of Christ, the righteousness of the Son of God, he may do what he will, he may build as he pleases, and make all men admire his wonderful works, and as sure as he lives
he

he shall see all fall; for all is built upon sand, and without a foundation.

This is not the only place in the scriptures where our Saviour and his righteousness is called a rock, or foundation; for even in the prophets and in the Psalms, he was preached as the rock of ages; and so Moses taught the children of Israel, and David so sung in the congregation of God, Deut. xxxii. 4, 15, Psalm lxxi. 3. lxxii. 2, &c.

Isaiah also had done the same, when he said, "Thus saith the Lord God, behold I lay in Sion for a foundation, a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-stone, a sure Foundation," Isa. xxviii. 16.

This was the rock Peter considered, when he said to our Saviour, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Our Saviour says, "Upon this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," Matt. xvi. 18.

St. Paul says, "There is no other foundation; other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus," 1 Cor. iii. 11. And St. Peter applies that place of the Psalms to Christ, "This is the Stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the Head-Stone in the corner," Acts iv. 11. It should not surprize us that to some this rock is an offence, and a stone of stumbling. To all self-righteous people he will be so to the end of the world. The doctrine of his merit, his divinity, and righteousness, will for ever be discarded by such who have never seen through the deceitfulness of our performances and duties, nor known how sin has mingled with and spoiled all our holy things; but to the poor in spirit, to such as feel their fallen state, and whose eyes are open to their own misery, him and his righteousness will be precious, dearer than silver or fine gold, yea more precious and sweet than honey or the honey-comb.

A soul

A soul who is wise to eternal life, is properly likened by our dear Master to a builder. Should one go about to build a house which he would have stand some hundred years, he would first dig deep, he would not value any pains to come at the solid ground, the firm rock, nor would he count it lost time to make this sure, but having found this, he could go on safely. So also is it with a sincere man; he will not be cheated with the form of godliness, he will not any more think, if I do all the good I can, that is sufficient, and should I fail at last, I hope Christ's righteousness shall make up the rest, for this would be indeed to make our works the first, and Christ the last, to be ourselves the beginning, and let him be the end. No, he hears the sayings of our Saviour, he is awakened to hear in his heart and to understand, and cannot readily satisfy himself, and cry peace when there is no peace. His first thoughts are, I do not know the righteousness of God, I am a stranger to the kingdom of heaven, I have not yet received it in my heart, I will therefore not conclude myself a true christian, I will not look upon myself converted, or fancy I am a child of God, till I can say, "Surely, in the Lord have I righteousness."

He digs deep, and with tears and inward longing, and a thirst insatiable; he looks after a foundation that cannot be shaken, a rock that shall stand when the heavens shall wax old, and the earth perish, and all old things pass away, and no place be found for them any more. Though at times he enjoys many happy frames, passes some happy hours in the company of children of God, hears with delight the everlasting gospel, and often tastes the powers of the world to come, with a sort of ecstasy and rapture not to be expressed, yet he is not satisfied till our Saviour is found of him, and has manifested himself to him, till he can say, I have found the Lord: In

his deep wounds he lays his foundation, and on his righteousness rests fearless and safe. This is the Corner-stone which the builders have rejected : This was the foundation of the prophets and apostles : This is the Head-stone in all God's building, " Whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed," Eph. ii. 20. Rom. ix. 33.

On the other hand, he is a foolish man, who, without much thought, 'builds upon the sand. His work may make a fine shew, and go on fast, but the first swelling flood, the first high tide, when the rains come heavy upon it, and washes away the sand, and when the wind blows and beats against it, it falls. Just so is it with a soul who, without understanding our Saviour, hears his sayings, and goes and seeks first his own righteousness ; he pleases himself that his sincere obedience will do, and after he has done all he can, he shall get the kingdom of heaven. He does not seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and besides that all is sand, all is without a foundation and ground ; and though a man may go far, and busy himself in his dry morality and good works, as he falsely calls them, he must sooner or later find it will not do, when he stands before the Judge of all the earth. Then when God weighs his prayers, alms, duties, honesty and religion, he must see the hand-writing again him, " **TEKEL, TEKEL,** Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting." This shall be the hurt of all, this shall be the ruin and spoiling of the whole, he built without our Saviour, he was without the righteousness of God, he never found the rock, and perhaps never digged or sought after him, he ventured to stop short of him, and to build without a foundation, and therefore he shall suffer the loss of all, and lose his own soul, his hopes, and all he built on that sand.

David has that character, by way of eminence
among

among the prophets, that he was the man after God's own heart, 1 Sam. xiii. 14. but yet however blameless he had lived in other respects, however religious and strict, yet he knew no righteousness could avail or help him but the righteousness of God, and therefore he prays, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant;" he knew he could not stand the trial, or be justified by his works, but says, "I will go out in the strength of the Lord, and will make mention of thy righteousness, and thine only," Psalm lxxi 6. and this was his salvation and all his desire, when he came to die.

Think then how weighty, and above all other things this is necessary, that the kingdom of Jesus and his righteousness be found and made the Cornerstone, the sure Foundation of your souls. You must not say, how contrary to this doctrine many have preached and taught: "let God be true and every man a liar." The builders have now, as well as formerly, rejected this stone, and taught the people to lay first the sandy foundation of their own works and righteousness; but such rash and giddy men must one day be ashamed that they have done so, for they have taken away the Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him; they have made the preaching of Jesus an offence, and an occasion of stumbling, and the blind have led the blind till both fall into the ditch.

O that the Lord would awaken such preachers to see their sin, that henceforth they might venture no more to lead the souls at random, but, like St. Paul, preach him only, and know nothing besides him and his righteousness, that so they might be the means of saving themselves and those that hear them. A minister's wisdom and learning, in this respect, will be of little use to him, unless he has learned of the chief Minister that the rock is Christ; and if once he has happily found him, he will spare no cost or pains in his power to baffle and throw down all

other things set up in our Saviour's room, he will make a babel of self-righteousness, and as an idol treat every other pretended good but the only Holy One and his merits.

The fall of the Jewish church happened this way ; they stumbled at the stumbling-stone, they being ignorant of God's righteousness went about to establish their own, so did not submit to the righteousness of God. Yet St. Paul gives them thus far a good character, they had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge ; they sought righteousness, but they did not attain it, and wherefore ? because they sought it not in Christ, they sought it, not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, Rom. ix. 31, 32, 33. and x. 2, 3. In this same way many thousands, called christians, have foolishly built, and been entirely ruined. O that God would save all that hear me to-day from perishing this way, and give all such a due concern about a matter of so great moment, that from henceforth none might rest till he had found the Lord, and laid his foundation deep in the clefts of that rock. . .

There are two sorts of people who build upon the rock, and shall finally be saved ; the first of these believe the doctrine I have been laying down, and with all their hearts know, that all works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God * They are verily persuaded, that all things built upon any other ground or basis, but upon the Lord, must fall, and therefore they cannot rest or be satisfied till they have found him ; but then they afterwards deal foolishly, for instead of walking in Christ Jesus as they received him under a sense of their own poverty and impotence, and so living daily, and going on and building on his merits

* See the 13th Article of the Church of England.

and sufferings, his obedience and travail, his love and free salvation, they fancy that they must complete his work with their own works, and are always aiming at some high estate, and to perfect, as it were, his salvation. Their works are not simply and only to glorify our Saviour, but with a view to make themselves somewhat better, and out of a legal and beguiled heart, or rather from a puzzled and perplexed head, they seek to establish their righteousness upon the ground of Christ's; and though they never attain their ends, yet by such a fruitless and vain attempt they lose much, and their lives are not so happy and comfortable in the enjoyment of the Lord Jesus and his grace; and even these are they of whom St. Paul speaks, when he says, "they have built with wood, hay, and stubble, their works shall be burnt up, and they shall suffer the loss of them, &c. but they shall be saved, yet so as by fire," 1 Cor. ii. 12, 15. This fiery trial is in another place yet mentioned, and will serve to make the matter more clear. "A day shall come when the Lord shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver," Mal. iii. 2, 3. His fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is, that as when a refiner melts gold or silver he burns up the dross, or causes it to evaporate, so our Saviour, who will refine and purge the whole house of Israel, will purge away all those works done with a servile or selfish view; and what savours of pride, highness, or what is self-righteousness under another name, or in disguise, or what serves to exalt man, or set up the creature, all this shall be burnt up; but the soul justified and grounded upon him, (however in other matters they may have dealt weakly and foolishly) shall be saved; for what God has built upon the stone laid in Sion, shall not be lost; for our Saviour's honor and word sake, they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. But such as I have now described, through their making so

much of their works, and laying so little stress upon our Saviour, often trouble themselves exceedingly, and unless at some particular seasons of grace, or in some sweet frames, they are either very apt to doubt and be heavy, and so suffer loss unspeakable, or else through a sort of spiritual pride, and forgetting they were perfect only through the comeliness our Saviour had put upon them, they should be ready to think, my own works and faithfulness have done this, and so provoke God to strip them and make them naked and bare, as was the case of Israel, Ezek. xvi. 14, &c. so these suffer a loss also, and learn by painful experience, it is best to sit down at Jesu's feet meek and lowly, and rest wholly upon him like a poor sinner for ever.

The second sort of people who build upon the rock and shall be saved, are such as have deeply felt the fall and misery of their own souls, and who have learned of the Holy Spirit how ruined, helpless, and spoiled they were by nature, and who sought and found the rock of ages, Christ Jesus, and whom no joy, grace, or blessing could exalt, but rather abase, and make more and more ashamed, before his gracious feet. These are the people truly zealous of good works, and for our Saviour's sake would rather die than grieve him: They pray, they hear, they love the ordinances of Christ, and do joyfully all his will; his commandments are not grievous to them; they shun what they can suppose would grieve him, as a serpent, hating the very places where they have sinned, and the garments spotted with the flesh, but in the bottom of their hearts they make no righteousness of it; no terrible law has urged them on, or thundering judgments driven them to their strict obedience; love has constrained them; and out of a heart washed and made happy through the blood of the Lamb, they have done all their works, and
with

with shame have been sorry that in all things they have come so short and failed ; but they live upon the pardon and free mercy of Jesus, as at first, and know they are saved freely and loved, not for works of righteousness that they have done, nor do they stand in the favour of God by means of their goodness, but in faith they stand, and through grace are preserved for his name sake, and built up in the knowledge and love of God : every fault or weakness they perceive, brings them nearer to our Saviour for forgiveness, and teaches them to cleave to him the more, to love him dearer, and to resolve to stay with him, and continue his poor and needy children. Such an one does not want to be high or eminent, or to be esteemed a saint, or better than another, but his highest aim is to please the Lord that bought him, his tender heart inwardly honours and lives to him, and he enjoys an uninterrupted happy season with his Redeemer. He gets more and more acquainted with him, and is more solidly built, rooted, and grounded in him. No forced conclusions from certain scriptures, or consequences of some favorite doctrine or scheme of religion are his support : he is not edified with fancies, but with a real intimacy and familiarity with our best friend, the Lord Christ, and by a sure knowledge of his heart toward him. This man builds with gold, silver, and precious stones, and when the fire shall try every man's works he shall stand, and his works be rewarded with his divine Master's approbation, "Well done good and faithful servant," and he shall not lose his crown of rejoicing.

There are also two sorts of foolish people who miss salvation ; the first who hear our Saviour's sayings, but as lightly regard them as if they were of no consequence ; and these never seek after happiness, but run on in sin, in drunkenness, blasphemy, whoredoms,

whoredoms, careless and debauched livings, and, like as a horse rushes into the battle, they rush into hell, and these are really much to be pitied, though they pity not themselves. There is yet another sort who are serious, and profess a religious life, but superficially and without digging deep, and searching for the only rock and sure foundation, which is Jesus Christ; they content themselves in their good church, their religious customs, their pious deeds, charity, and prayers, &c. and this serves till a time of trial; but when death warns them to another world, and the close thoughts of standing before God in such a righteousness, the feeling no inward certainty or confidence of our Saviour's love, but a secret fear of departing, a mistrusting all, and finding that conviction, "yet lackest thou one thing," they fail, and begin to cry out for some better ground. Sometimes the house built upon sand stands till the flood out of the dragon's mouth, which is persecution, ariseth, or when temptations, numerous as drops of rain, descend, or when every wind of doctrine blows against it, and then down it falls, and the soul, the cheated and deceived soul, is left wretched, naked, frightened, and miserable, and might be told before men and angels, Thou fool, without a foundation, thou hast built upon sand.

In both these cases it is yet somewhat tolerable; for a person awakened upon his death bed, and convinced that hitherto he has deceived his own soul, may, and shall, when he turns to the Lord, find him a rock whereon he may trust, and shall thereby escape. Also one shook with persecution, or by temptations, or who by means of some powerful wind of doctrine sees his righteousness, which perhaps for many years together he had been building up, now thrown down in a moment, and is in distress, and wants a rest for his soul, may apply to the

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the healer of his people, and find that man a refuge in the strong wind and tempests, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. But there are souls who will not be convinced of their folly till the great day, the day of decision comes, and then, however they have vaunted, and stood proudly, however fine and gaudy their show of piety may appear, if they have not found Jesus in their hearts, if they have rejected that head stone in the corner, and have not his righteousness, though they had in appearance the holiness of a cherub, it shall fall ! the tempest of that day, the shaking of heaven and earth, and the presence of the Refiner, before whose face the angels are charged with folly, and in whose sight the heavens are impure, shall amaze them, and they and all their false hopes, their knowledge, and whatever else they could boast of, shall fall, and great shall be the fall : They shall tremble and shake before our Saviour, and sink down into the pit with all their religion, because they despised the elect stone which God laid in Sion, and would sooner and rather trust their own righteousness and goodness than the merits and righteousness of God our Saviour. In that day shall it be proved true, "Blessed are all they that have put their trust in him."

Since then Christ is become the chief corner-stone, the foundation and ground of his poor people : let all here ask their own hearts, Am I built upon him ? Have I by experience a right to say, The Lord is my rock, I have found the Lord ? To such as have found him he is a precious and a tried stone ; precious, since all who have him are hereby made safe and happy to eternity. And not only has God tried him, when he laid upon him all our sins, and visited our iniquities upon him, and he endured and went through the wrath, and proved a faithful advocate and surety of his people ; but many thousand

sand prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and virgins, in all ages, have rested and built all upon him, and found him faithful. Their last hours were witness how he stood by them ; they could depart rejoicing and fearless, nor did any of them depend upon him in vain. They trusted in him and were holpen. They were built upon him, and neither fire, nor water, nor persecutions, nor temptations, nor life, nor death, nor Satan, nor the gates of hell prevailed against them. They have overcome, they stood and fell not, because they were built upon the rock. The blood of Christ, like well-tempered mortar, bound them together, and to himself, and now they help to make his temple, his eternal habitation.

Many millions who have presumptuously founded their hopes, and built on other foundations, have sorely felt their loss when they came upon a death-bed ; and though perhaps before they scorned to depend upon Christ and his merits, and would not be of their religion who wholly rest on his grace, but chose rather to confide in their good life, or repentance, or duties, or charity, &c. yet when the terrors of death came upon them, and they found themselves launching into eternity, and just going to appear before God, finding their hearts fail, and all their fine and formerly admired structure totter, they have cried out for a Saviour and his blood, and have been glad to die as poor sinners saved by grace, and joined the happy company they once despised ; but though this happens daily and in all ages, none who have laid their foundation on the rock, or trusted in Jesus, have thus changed in their last moments. No ; death, let it come like a sweet sleep upon them, or rush on with all the horrors of persecution and bitter pangs, or sickness, have shaken, much less overturned, their confidence in Christ ;
they

they have not repented that they honored him too much, or made too much of his free mercy and merits; nor have they warned others to beware of such a danger, or found him whom they believed and knew in the world, now leave them to perish, or forsake them when their strength failed them. O no: they all have rejoiced in his salvation, and thought and confessed, amidst all their weaknesses, agonies, and sicknesses, how blessed they were in having built upon this rock, and having got the Most High God for their Saviour. O how sweet and precious is the Lamb in a dying hour! to have him with us, and to be sensible his everlasting arms are underneath when we are expiring, and bidding all the world adieu, is above all things blessed. A soul in this case is not afraid: he is built upon the rock, and shall stand.

May the great Master Builder, our Lord and Saviour Jesus, give us a deep foundation in him, and even when all other things give way and fall, may we have our eternal ground and safety under his shadow and in his wounds, and abide unshaken in his arms and everlasting love, living and dying, in time and in eternity. Amen.

A PRAYER.

O MY dear and loving Saviour, who art the true Rock and Corner-stone of all the apostles and prophets, and in whom they trusted and were saved, bear upon thy heart the poorest soul that ever called upon thy name. From that glory into which thou art now ascended, and amidst all the honours and praises with which thou art now surrounded, forget not

not me in my low estate, but remember me now thou art in thy kingdom.

Thou knowest my sincere desire to be saved, and to be with thee eternally ; and lest I should be in any danger, O my dear Lord and Master, direct me to lay my foundation on the rock, and let thy Holy Spirit lead me deep into thy wounds, and settle, root, and ground me therein, that no power, tempter, or storm may ever be able to shake or remove me, world without end.

I pray thee let me not be foolish in thy eyes in this respect, or satisfy myself with any thing less than the sure enjoyment of thy presence and love in my heart. Let me experience thy favour, and be out of doubt of thy pardon ; and in the truest peace of mind, and continual fellowship with thee, let me be thy disciple, and poor, but happy pilgrim in this life, and pass my days in the assurance of my eternal salvation.

For thy tender mercies sake suffer me never to be deceived, so as to build upon sand : O rather let my heart and soul unfeignedly rest upon thy blood and righteousness, and even in my last hour ; and when thou shalt come again to judgement, let me be found built upon the Rock of ages, and without fear enter the valley of the shadow of death, and receive the message of the king of terrors. Let me undismayed hear the trumpet blow before thee in the day of thy coming, and stand before thee bold as a lion. Let me appear before thee clothed in thy righteousness, and wearing thy new name having the Holy Ghost, till that blessed time, my daily Comforter, bearing witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God. Grant this prayer, thou gracious and almighty Lord God, my only Saviour, for thy love's sake. Amen.

AN HYMN.

1 **T**HE Rock, the precious Corner-stone,
My soul has found, and builds thereon,
And from the top she sees
The glory of the world above,
She takes a prospect of the grove
Of everlasting trees.

2 Here, out of reach of ev'ry foe,
She stoops, and views the world below,
Beholds the desert lands,
Where fiends conspire like winds and rain,
And swelling floods, to shake in vain,
The rock on which she stands.

3 When high the stormy billows rise,
And clouds prevent the clearer skies,
My soul finds here a rest ;
A hiding-place till all is o'er,
The clefts I prove, secure and sure,
Where happy I am blest.

4 Within this rock my soul describes
A thousand sacred rarities,
The place where Moses was,
When he JEHOVAH'S glory view'd,
The back-parts of the unseen God,
As through transparent glass.

5 Here one may also stand and see
Mount Tabor and Mount Calvary ;
And from this Mountain's height,
A soul whose eyes are strong may view
Mount Sion, and the armies too,
Upon it cloath'd in white.

- 6 On this eternal Rock are grav'n
The names of all who go to heav'n,
This stone God try'd and laid,
That all the church might build thereon ;
Christ Jesus is this chosen Stone ;
I'll trust him unafraid.

DISCOURSE X.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

LUKE X. 37.

“Go, and do thou likewise.”

WHEN the Pharisees and Lawyers heard our blessed Master, in the days of his flesh, preach the free salvation of God, namely, that sinners are to be saved, not by works of righteousness which they have done, but of God's own mercy, and by a righteousness given them from him, elsewhere therefore called the righteousness of God, they were greatly offended, and used to set men to watch his words, to see if they could intangle him in his talk, and so find an occasion to put him to death. It was with some such view a certain lawyer (or teacher of the law of Moses) came tempting our Saviour, and asking him, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” As though he had said, if we cannot be saved by keeping the law, by offering sacrifices, and by doing good, what must I do? To whom the Lord Jesus (finding him not convinced of sin, or of his helpless state by the law, for which end the law was given, but on the contrary building on his own performances, as I fear many thousands in this land do) gave him this answer, “What is written in the law? How readeest thou?” He answered, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind,

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and

and thy neighbour as thyself." Then said Jesus, "Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live." Which words were the promise of God to the people of Israel, on condition of keeping every tittle of the law, Lev. xviii. 5. which no one naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam ever did; so that our Saviour put the lawyer to look into the law, not as if he could fit himself thereby for the kingdom of heaven; but he thus spake to put him in mind, that if he did all that was written in the law he should live, but if he broke the least point (as he had certainly done) he was guilty of all, and under the curse, and must stand in need of the righteousness of God, which he preached, and which also was witnessed by the law, and the prophets, of which also I may speak a little more hereafter, but will now return to the history.

The lawyer, who was far from seeing the end of the law, and therefore willing to justify himself, being thus answered by our Saviour, again replied, "And who is my neighbour?" In answer to which, the Lord put forth the parable of a poor man, who, in his journey from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. While he lay in this sad condition, by chance there came by a Priest, and after him a Levite, who both looked on him, but passed by on the other side of the road without helping him. At last came by a Samaritan, and when he saw him he had compassion on him, and alighted down from his beast, and went to the poor man, and poured oil and wine into his wounds, and bound them up, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him; and having given a charge to the host to do the same, saying, "When I come again I will repay thee," he went on his way. Jesus having spoken after this manner, asked the lawyer, "Which of these three,

three, thinkest thou, was neighbour to him that fell among thieves?" The lawyer answered, "He that shewed mercy on him." Then said Jesus, in the words of our text, "Go, and do thou likewise."

Before I begin to shew our duty to our neighbour, or speak much on the words just now mentioned, I purpose to speak of the parable, and to open it, and shew from thence, the miserable state of sinners by nature, and the free salvation in Christ Jesus.

It is certain, that all the parables and histories in the holy scripture are written for our learning, and, as the bees out of every flower gather some honey, so we, out of every portion of the inspired writings, should gather some spiritual food for our souls. But as the bees cannot draw out the honey till the sun shining on them opens the flowers, so neither can we get any sweetness from the word till the Sun of righteousness shines on it, and opens it to our understanding; for till then the most plain places are all like a book sealed. Pray then, my dear friends, that while you attend to the things here spoken of, the Lord may arise and shine thereon, and give you understanding in all things.

Our Saviour begins the parable thus: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." It is very likely this man was a Jew, who dwelt in Jerusalem, and might have taken the chief of his money with him, and was going to Jericho to trade there, which the thieves knowing, might therefore way-lay him, and so as he passed along rise upon him and rob him. It is remarkable they did not only take away his money, but his raiment, and left him naked; and not content with taking away all he had, they bruised him, and wounded him, and almost killed him. It may be they also bound him, and

threw him into some ditch by the way side, and so departed, leaving him half dead. All this they might do that he might be unable to pursue them, or to assist any against them, if they should chance to come by while they were treating him so evilly. As he lay so sadly mangled, and distressed, and I suppose groaning and sighing (for he was half dead, and so could not cry out, or call for help) a Priest happened to pass by that way. Now a Priest was one separated from the congregation, and made holy to the Lord, as was Aaron, that he might pity the people, and pray and offer for them sacrifices and burnt offerings, as the Lord commanded Moses. Such a one passed by the poor man in his distress; but though he was one of his brethren, and from whom the afflicted Jew might have expected some pity, yet he only looked on him, and without shewing any mercy, passed by on the other side, that is, he turned away his face, and went as far on the other side of the way as he could, that he might not be asked by the poor man for his help. Soon after he was gone, behold another of the children of Israel passed that way, a Levite, or one of the tribe of Levi, whose office was to attend in the temple, and help the Priests in offering the offerings, and in reading the law and the prophets, &c. He also came and looked on him, but, as the other did, passed by on the other side. How miserable was the unhappy Israelite? He had lost his all; he had no clothes on to hide his shame; was wounded, and perhaps bound, and, it may be, gagged, to prevent his crying; and if they had not done so to him, yet as he was half dead, he was incapable of crying, unable to rise to go back to his house, or to beg. If any had come, and said, Give me so much and I will help thee, he could not have complied, for he was stripped, and had nothing to give. But this he might have said, Help me, and I will give thee praise

so long as I live, and more he could not have promised. What must he have done, had he continued in this sad condition long? Why, he must have bled himself to death, or have perished in the cold of the night. But in the height of his distress came by another man, a Samaritan, and as he rode near, he saw his poor fellow creature in this deplorable state, and had compassion on him. Here I cannot but observe, that the Jews and Samaritans were enemies one to another, and so hated each other, that if they met would not speak to or salute each other in the common way; especially the Jews hated the Samaritans, as may be seen by that passage in John iv. 9. and when the Jews could call our Saviour by no worse name, they called him a Samaritan and a devil. When the dying man lifted up his weak eyes, and saw who passed by, I do not doubt but his heart fainted; when he remembered how in times past he had abused and hated the Samaritans, and could not now expect any mercy from one whom he had made his enemy. However, the good Samaritan got down from his beast, and began to pour into the man's wounds wine and oil to stay the bleeding, and to supple and heal them. I dare say, in the greatest tenderness he laid his hand on his head, and made him lean on his bosom, while he bound up his wounds; and having dressed them and refreshed him, he pulled off some of his own raiment to cover his nakedness: We do not hear that he upbraided him with his former evil treatment of the people of Samaria, or refused him mercy because he was not one of his own religion, or because he was a Jew: No, he passed by all this, and without looking for any reward for his pains, yea, when he knew he could expect nothing, he willingly stooped to shew him kindness, and having recovered him, sat him on his beast, and was himself content to walk by him as a servant, till he had brought

brought him to an inn, and took care of him. Did he leave him here, and do no more? I tell you nay; he tarried with him all night: it is likely he sat up with him, and nursed him till the next morning, and when he departed he gave the host two pieces of money, and gave him a charge concerning the poor stranger, and said, take care of him. * You see he did not only take care of one who a few days ago was his enemy himself, but he bids the host, the man of the house, take care of him too, saying, "Whatsoever thou layest out more, I, when I come again, will repay thee." 'May not all who hear this relation wondering say, "See how he loved him!" I believe all who hear me will commend the compassionate Samaritan, and say, he did well. Then learn from hence how ye ought to behave even toward your enemies, and them of other opinions, and go, O man, and do thou likewise.

But attend a little while, and let me ask thee, thou that hearest these things, dost thou know who this poor man was, of whom I have been making mention? If thou dost not know, * I will tell thee,—it is thy own poor soul, thou art the man. When our Father Adam had his power and righteousness in his own hands in paradise, as he journeyed there, the devil and his angels, those thieves, watched for him, and stripped him of his righteousness, and not him only, but all his wretched race, and bound him with unbelief, wounded him with lust, pride, covetousness, wrath, disobedience, &c. and having cast him out of the way of peace, and put him into a perishing condition, left him half dead, i. e. dead in soul, and dying in his body, without power to turn to God, or help himself, or rise to seek for mercy, but indeed helpless and miserable. In this sad condition he could not have promised God, this I will do, or that will I do, if thou wilt help me; he could do
nothing,

nothing, but feeling the smart and pain of sin, and a wounded conscience, sigh away his threescore and ten years, and then perish for ever in hell. When poor man was thus fallen, the Lord gave the Mosaiscal dispensation, which was meant by the Priest and Levite's passing by. In vain are all the offerings and prayers of ten thousand Priests; in vain the fat of slain beasts, and the blood of lambs, and goats, and calves of a year old, when offered to take away the sinner's sin, and to restore him to his former happy estate: In vain the Levite reads the law, and bids the sinner rise, do all the good he can, keep the commandments, and diligently walk in all the ordinances of the Lord; for he by nature hath no power, nor can do one good thing in the sight of the Lord, till he is quickened and born again of the Holy Ghost.

Perhaps some who hear me to-day may be ready to cry out, O sir, I am the man that have fallen among thieves, I am stripped of all innocence, and righteousness, and am sorely wounded, and left captive by sin; I feel what once I was a great stranger to, even the pain and smart of a wounded spirit; I know I cannot help myself, I am bound with unbelief; I am dead in my soul, having been alienated from the life of God, and am truly half dead; in this wretched estate I am left, a naked trembling soul, at the point to perish eternally. Methinks I hear thee say, Every thing from whom I expected redress or comfort hath passed by on the other side, and now what shall I do? Why, behold the good Samaritan draws near! Jesus is the good Samaritan, the Saviour whom thou hast most evilly treated by wicked works, than the Jews ever treated the Samaritans. Thou hast made him endure sore trials, of mocking, of shame, of pain, and art his professed enemy; yet, he looks upon thee; he sees thy soul ready to perish, and lo, he alights from his throne, and comes down from
heaven

heaven to earth, that he may shew thee mercy. Do thy wounds smart, do thy sins put thee to pain? His rich blood, like wine, will he pour in, and lay thy pained heart to his pierced heart, and revive thee; his own right hand shall hold thee up, and his left hand shall embrace thee, sinner; poor, helpless sinner, be not afraid, for though thou canst not pray for thyself, nor rise from thy low estate to seek help, yet thou shalt not perish; only open thy eyes, and see the good Samaritan reaching out salvation to thee. His grace shall be like sweet healing oil, wherewith he shall anoint and bathe all thy bruised places, and recover thee: But thou sayest, O, I have made him mine enemy, and can look for no mercy at his hands; it would be the greatest presumption for me to hope to receive any thing from the Lord, but "Go thou cursed." Nay, my dear brother, say not so; he hath compassion on thee, else why did he come so far to see thee in thy sad condition, and why doth he speak so comfortably to thee? He doth not upbraid thee with thy past iniquities, nor will he remember thy sin and thy transgressions any more. Art thou naked, and stripped, and in thy shame? He hanged naked upon the cross, and was stripped among all the soldiers, that thou mightest put on his raiment, his spotless everlasting righteousness. Art thou in pain? His bleeding hand applied to thy sin-sick heart, will give thee ease immediately. Art thou bound? He will loose thee, and let thee go. Be not then fearful, look to him whom thou hast pierced, and believe in his precious name, and thou shalt be saved.

Have you not heard, how the Samaritan behaved toward the poor Jew? thus Christ teaches thee his behaviour to poor sinners. The Samaritan, after he had tenderly waited on the afflicted man, and a little recovered him, and had refreshed his spirits, sate him on his own beast, and walked by him till he had

had brought him to the inn, and then paid for his entertainment, and tarried with him till the next day, and having given the host a charge of him, promised to pay all his expenses for the future: thus doth the Son of God. Surely, the Lord Jesus is not more lively shadowed out in any parable, or similitude, than in this before us. He uncovers himself to cover sinners, and takes care of them, insomuch that he was content to be our servant, and walked weary through the world, that poor diseased souls might be carried in the chariot of his everlasting arms to heaven. How doth he also charge his ministers (who have the souls he hath redeemed committed to their charge) to take care of them? "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith the Lord? and leaving with the officers of his church (which is our inn on this side our eternal country) power, and encouragement, and patience, and a blessing, that they may wait on his dear children, he saith, "And what thou spendest more, when I come, I will repay thee:" As if he had said, What thou layest out in pains, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, in travail, in temptations, in sufferings, I will repay in the last day. And here, see how he exalts his free mercy throughout all the discourse! He doth not say, that the Priest, or the Levite, or one of his friends, helped the poor man that was robbed, but that a Samaritan was his friend, one that might justly have been his enemy, and left him in his forlorn condition. So he shews us, that though we might have looked for justice instead of mercy, yet will he take pleasure in justifying the ungodly, and shew mercy even on his enemies, and glorify himself in laying down his life for them, when they were dead in trespasses and in sins.

And now let me address myself to you, who have found this good Samaritan pass by you: who know that

that your naked souls have been saved, and covered in the righteousness of the son of God ; who can say, He passed by me when I was in my blood, and naked, and cast his skirt over me, and poured on my wounded conscience his oil, and wine, and recovered my languishing fainting soul : He brought me tenderly to his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love : He hath risen upon me with healing in his wings, and restored me more than I lost in the fall, when the devils stripped me, and wounded me, and left me naked and bare, and not only half, but quite dead in trespasses and sins ; I lost then my happiness, my comfort, my life, my all, but have found more lasting and perfect happiness, more solid and enduring consolation, and eternal life hid with Christ in God ; and now have I the Lord for my portion, and my treasure is in heaven, where moth and rust cannot corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through and steal ? To you I speak (who can say such things) and yet not I, but the Lord, "Go, and do thou likewise ;" go, and deal so tenderly by thy afflicted fellow sinners, and be kind to all in their distress, whether it be of body, or soul, of thine own, or different opinion, or religion, and be ready to reach out thy gifts to the needy and poor, and shew compassion on the just and on the unjust, on the evil and on the good, on thy friends, and those of thy own people, and on the greatest of thine enemies. Go, and blaze abroad the fame of the good Samaritan, and seeing he helped and saved thee freely, when thou hadst no strength, go, and praise his free distinguishing mercy and grace for evermore.

And to you who are now convinced of your fallen miserable nature, and who have found no help, I intend speaking a few words, and then conclude. I need not tell you your case, how you are fallen among thieves,

thieves, and are wounded, and naked, and ruined ; this experience teaches you ; you have been shewn from God how you are stripped of every thing that is good, and like as he has told you, that you are naked, and you are ashamed before him, and do loath and abhor yourselves in dust and ashes, I come to shew you where you may have a covering, and this is in Christ's righteousness. He was made naked and " sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Have you not read, how when God had told Adam he was naked, that he made man a coat, or raiment, of the skins of beasts to hide his nakedness ? This he did, that sinners might learn when they are ashamed of their sin, and of their fallen nature, they must come to God to be covered, or go naked to hell. " Wo be to those that cover them with a covering, but not of my Spirit, saith the Lord ;" you are to look to the Lamb of God on the mount Calvary, hanging naked for you, and stripped of all his regal attire and glory, and numbered with transgressors, ashamed, and poor, and afflicted, and know all this was done that thou mightest be cloathed ; he saw poor men naked and bare, and so pitied them, that for their sakes he became poor, that they through his poverty might become rich ; and having by so dear a rate purchased a garment for them, he washed the long fine robe in his own blood, and in this (I mean) his righteousness, all the poor sinners departed this life in his faith, now stand arrayed before the throne of God, and shall walk before him, for they are worthy. This is the righteousness which shall be your covering in that day ; this is that which we receive by believing in his name, and which is a robe long enough, and wide enough to hide every sin in thought, word, or deed, that ever thou hast committed ; as it is written, " Whosoever believeth in

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him shall not be ashamed," this is that white linen which he invites thee to buy of him for nothing, saying, "I counsel thee to buy of me raiment, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." O reject not the counsel of God against your dear souls, but accept of this free salvation, and be happy for evermore!

You wounded souls, who complain, saying, "My wounds stink and are corrupt, through my foolishness; my sore ran, and ceased not in the night season; my soul refused comfort;" why do ye complain as though there was no balm in Gilead? and as if no physician was there? Have ye not heard of Jesus? Have ye not known what excellent cures he hath wrought in all the world? Was it possible for you to get on the borders of the good land, and ask the souls arrived safe there, what he hath done for them? all would tell how they were in your case, wounded, and lost, and half dead, and he arose upon them with healing in his wings. Nor would these only tell the same of Jesus in this matter, but many, many in this howling wilderness can tell you the same, and say, I was in misery, and he helped me. I was ready to perish, and was lying helpless, and ruined, and spoiled, and robbed of all, when he passed by, and had compassion on me, and he healed me of whatever disease I had. He poured on my fainting heart the wine of his blood, and bathed my bruised and smarting conscience with oil brought from heaven, and hath brought me now to the inn of his church, and charged his ministers and his angels to take care of me; let this then encourage you to look up to this Samaritan, I mean, the Lord Jesus who passes by, and looks down upon you. Let not the greatness of your misery, nor the long continuance of your wounds and poverty, &c. tempt you to think it is too late; you are yet out of hell,
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and perhaps there may be room for you in the kingdom of God. Who knows? this day Christ Jesus may begin the work of his salvation on your waiting souls; miserable as you are, look up towards his throne, shew him how you have heretofore grieved him, and slighted his mercy, and like the prodigal, lost all; and like a beggar, let your wants and your great pain and shame, plead for mercy. Methinks I hear you say, O could I be assured he looked upon me, and would heal me, and cover my shameful soul, I would make heaven and earth ring with his praise, I should be a pillar in his temple indeed! a pillar and a monument of his unmerited free electing love! Do you say so? why then, I trust, salvation is nigh, even at the door: when you are converted strengthen your brethren; and out of the love God shed abroad in your heart, and according to the riches of his free mercy and grace shewn to you, go, and do ye likewise to your poor friends and acquaintance. Go, and do likewise to your persecutors, slanderers, and such as speak all manner of evil against you falsely; so shall you adorn the gospel of Christ, and glorify your father which is in heaven.

To whom, with his dear Son and blessed Spirit, one glorious God, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore.

DISCOURSE XI.

SIMON AND MARY.

LUKE vii. 48.

Jesus said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

A CERTAIN Pharisee, named Simon, had invited our Saviour to dine with him, and according to his custom he went; for though our Saviour did not approve of the false righteousness of that sect, but was always displeased at the manner of their expounding the law, "whereby they made" it possible for a man to keep it, so as to escape the curses of it, and merit heaven by his works, and so stand blameless before God; whereas they were thereby only outwardly clear like a whited wall, or painted sepulchre, and needed the blood of Christ and his righteousness to make them all-glorious within, and to be without spot before God, and without which no one is freed from the curse of the law, or is indeed righteous or holy in God's sight; yet I say, though in this weighty matter the Pharisees stopped so short, and were ignorant of the righteousness of God by faith, and despised others who had none of their self-righteousness, when any of these asked our Saviour to come into their houses he went, and shewed how willing he was good and bad should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. "He sends the rain upon the just and unjust

unjust, and causes his sun to rise upon the evil and upon the good," and would have both be happy. He would have the self-righteous and high-minded be humbled, and leave all their self-wrought stuff, and obtain of him raiment that they might be clothed, and have on the true robe of salvation, the wedding-garment, because he knew well, however specious and fine all others might appear in men's eyes, it could not stand the fiery trial which must try every man's work; and on the other hand, he would have the careless and the disobedient reformed, and leave all their sins and follies, and come and wash in his blood, and put on his righteousness, and so escape the judgment of the great day. This mind of our Saviour's is every where visible in the holy scriptures, and with this view he sometimes entered public sinners' houses, such as Zaccheus's house at Jericho, and was a guest with a man that was a sinner: another time he sits down with the publican Levi; and now he goes to be a guest with one of the strictest sect of the Jewish religion. Indeed the last is more to be admired than the former. Poor sinners wanted a Saviour; and therefore, when they heard him preach, and offer his grace so freely, no wonder they prayed him to come into their hearts and houses: they wanted just such a Saviour, and he came on purpose from heaven to seek to save such lost sheep. But that the Pharisees could invite him to their houses was a real wonder; they despised his free grace and righteousness, and thought they were well enough already: they thought, we are rich, and have need of nothing; but happily some of these are drawn to Jesus, and, like St. Paul, see that all their goodness is like the morning dew, and even dung and dross, and will so esteem it, that they may win Christ and his righteousness.

It seems as if the Holy Jesus had loved Simon, and had ordered the whole matter so, that he might see an instance of his free love, and hear the gospel, and be awakened to feel his real need of a better righteousness than his own, and therefore would that day come into his house.

While he was sitting at table with him, a poor woman, called Mary, a notorious sinner, who, it is like, had heard him preach, followed him in; and when she was got behind him, she fell down, weeping upon his feet, and kissing them, and anointed them with ointment, and in this posture she continued till our Saviour mercifully said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven."

The manner in which she found pardon, and some particulars relating to this blessed act of our Lord's gracious dealing with her, is not so fully recorded by any other evangelist as by St. Luke, and is worthy of our strictest attention.

As St. Luke was not of the twelve, but wrote his gospel, as himself tells us, from what he heard of the apostles and other witnesses by Jesus Christ's miracles, which were confirmed to him by those who saw and were present when he did the things of which he writes, so it was easy for him to be less exact in the order of setting down some memorable passages; and neither is it material therein to be so particular and punctual, since the main thing aimed at, through all the gospel, is the grace and mercy of God our Saviour, which must be testified to every creature under heaven, and a relation of those mighty works which he did in the days of his flesh, that by hearing this, other sinners might be brought to him, and believe on him, to the saving of their souls.

The reason of this remark is, because the other three evangelists mention this woman's coming to
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our Saviour, and anointing him, and they too agree it was in the house of Simon the Leper in Bethany, only they make it to have happened not many days before the last passover, when Jesus suffered; and St. Luke gives us an account of it in the beginning of his gospel. Some think this account of St. Luke's, and that of the other three, should be understood of two different anointings, and by two different women, the first Mary Magdalen, the second Mary the sister of Lazarus; but I rather believe all the accounts are of one and the same time and person: however, as my design is not to criticise, or scrutinize into the less material part of the divine history, but to speak of the act of grace vouchsafed to a poor guilty woman; I shall say no more on this matter, but pass on to execute my purpose.

We are told, in the 36th verse, that a Pharisee had Jesus to eat with him, and he was gone into his house, and at meat when the woman came in.

Here we may observe, as I said before, that though the Pharisees were a self-righteous and opiniated sect of people, and who had perverted the very meaning of the law, with false glosses and explanations, so that they justly fell under the severest woes pronounced by our Saviour, yet when one of these wanted him to come into his house, Jesus went. His business was with all sorts, with the self-righteous, "to bring down the high from their seats;" and with the sinners, to shew them salvation, "and exalt them of low degree."

A woman of the city, notorious for crimes and sins, followed him in. Some of the fathers say she had heard him preach about the lost sheep, and I suppose was so affected, that, forgetting the Pharisees utter abhorrence of such people, she ventured into the house: or if she had remembered how they would not suffer a sinner to touch them, or
come

come near them, yet as her case was so deplorable and heavy, she might easily think:—What shall I do? This good Shepherd only can help me: he can but spurn me away, or bid me depart; and who knows? May be he may have mercy upon me; I will go in after him, guilty and miserable as I am, and fall down vile as the dirt under his feet. Just so once Esther thought, when her own life, and the life of her people, was at stake: upon pain of death none might speak with the king; and, if she did not get to him, she knew all their lives would be lost in a little time; and therefore she said, “I can but perish, and if I perish, I will perish at the king’s feet:” this said, she ventured in, and obtained mercy for herself and all the Jews. And thus it was when four Samaritan lepers waited in a perishing condition without the gates of Samaria: they said one to another, “If we go into the city, the famine is there; and if we continue here, we shall die. Let us go and fall into the hands of the Assyrians, we can but die; and peradventure they may save us alive.” And this venturing was the happy means of saving themselves, and all the city of Samaria, from dying with hunger; so then might Mary conclude, If I go back to the old course, I perish certainly: if I continue in this state, awakened to see my guilt and misery, and am not helped, I shall also perish; my sins are grievous to me, the burthen of them is intolerable; I can but be cast away, I will go and worship at his feet, perhaps the King of Israel is a merciful King, and will save my soul alive. I know there are many people whose eyes the Lord has opened, they know their fallen and lamentable estate and are afraid: some of these, instead of seeking mercy, turn back into the world, and after they have hardened their hearts, and blinded their eyes,

eyes, and made themselves like the deaf adder, which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely; they become twice dead, and have their latter end worse than the beginning. Others, like the door upon the hinges, move, but not out of the same place; they are often affected, and seem in earnest about their salvation, and anon are back in all their filthiness and sins again. But others, the wisest of all, hasten to the wounds of Jesus Christ; and are resolved, if they perish, to perish at his feet; these are they who often thus save themselves, and others that hear them: For none, however loaded with sin and oppressed, however spoiled and undone by Satan, came to our Saviour and went away unhelped. Of this truth, this woman in the text was a happy witness.

It is said, "she stood at his feet behind him weeping." She could not for shame stand before him, she knew what a wretch she had been, her guilt stared her in the face, and a sense of her sad estate made her weep. At last she sinks down at his feet, and as her tears flowed upon them, she wiped them off with her hair. I suppose all Jesus said at table affected her more and more; every word, I dare say, went to the heart, and the Holy Ghost, who had begun the good work, doubtless gave her to feel who Jesus was, and that "he was come to save Israel from all his sins." This sense of his grace, together with a sense of her sinful life, could melt her hard heart, and cause the tears to flow fast down; and when his feet were quite wet and washed therewith she might think, O I am unworthy that my polluted tears should touch his sacred feet; and then she wiped them off with her hair, and kissed them, perhaps thinking in her heart, These are the dear feet of that Shepherd who has

has left his ninety-nine in the wilderness to come and seek and save me; these are the blessed feet which have been weary and sore with journees and travelling in search of the lost sheep ME; and again she kissed them, and new floods of tears overstreamed them.

While this was doing, the pharisee, Simon, was sadly offended with our dear Saviour: He questioned if he even was a prophet; and thought, if he was, he would know who that woman is, and concluded, if he had been a good man, a righteous person, he would not suffer her to come near him. Poor man! he little thought what a Saviour the Son of God was: He did not know that he was come to save that which was lost, and to be a friend of sinners; and had he only have known the depth of his own heart, he had neither despised the woman, nor been offended with Jesus, but, in deepest shame and abasement, he had prostrated himself before him, and begged, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" It is a horrid and fearful thing to suppose, because one has lived a strict life, gone to church, received the sacrament, and done much good, that therefore one is righteous. Such was the righteousness of scribes and pharisees, and against such our Lord Jesus inveighed so earnestly, telling his disciples, "I say to you, except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of scribes and pharisees, you can in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." All the righteousness of men, all our works, our duties, our alms, and pious deeds, is but self-righteousness. It is but garnishing the tomb and beautifying the sepulchre: It is whitening the wall, and making clean the outside of the cup and platter. It is at best but the righteousness of works, the righteousness of the law, and by which "no flesh can be justified." This is what God calls, in
Isaiah,

Isaiah, filthy rags, a polluted cloth, and says, "It shall not profit thee." All this and more St. Paul had, before ever he was a christian, and because he knew the disciples spoke against depending on such a sandy foundation, he thought they spoke blasphemous words against Moses and the law, and persecuted to the utmost all of that way; but when his eyes were opened, no one was more zealous to set at nought all other righteousness but the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and this was the reason why publicans and harlots entered the kingdom before the self-righteous. The latter falsely concluded, they were good and righteous, and better than others, and so rested without Christ and his merits; but the former, when they heard the preaching, knew they had no righteousness, and came as guilty and lost souls to our Saviour, and obtained mercy, and he became the Lord their righteousness. This was indeed the case with Mary, and this was the case of Simon. He was ignorant of his fallen condition by nature, and knew he had not done the crimes she had done, and so supposed himself better, and one who had less, far less to be forgiven: This led him to despise the sinner, and to be offended with his Lord. This is the case of many in the world; they despise others as the dogs of the flock, and are themselves in as dangerous a state, and do not know it; but think, like Laodiceans as they are, "I am rich, and increased with goods, I have need of nothing, and am verily poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked."

Our Saviour knew Simon's thoughts, and watched all that passed in the weeping sinner Mary, and therefore said, "Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee;" and he said, "Master, say on." I suppose poor Mary listened eagerly to all that proceeded out of his mouth, and now more especially. Jesus said

said, "There was, in a certain city, a creditor which had two debtors; one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty." Immediately the poor woman felt the meaning; she thought, 'Thou Jesus art the creditor, and I and Simon are the two debtors; Simon owes him fifty, but I five hundred: And now she might justly expect to hear him say, when they had nothing to pay, he cast them into prison; but, to her eternal joy, he said, "And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave all:" Which of them will love him most? And Simon answered, "I suppose him to whom he forgave most:" And Jesus said, "Thou hast rightly judged." O how did her heart bound and leap for joy at hearing this! She wept tears of grief before, but now they were tears of joy that fell upon his feet. She saw the doctrine of free grace, and believed in unmerited mercy, and now more than ever she kissed his feet and anointed them with precious ointment; and now Jesus turned to the woman: This was what she wanted: She longed for a tender look, for a smile from that face of his:—he turned: It is not said, she then rose and stood before him; no, the hour of her deliverance was come: He turned and looked upon her, and said, "Seest thou this woman, Simon?" as if he had said, Behold this poor polluted harlot, this wicked and wandering child; "her sins, that are many, are forgiven her!" She must be overcome with joy and transport, for the kingdom of God was come to her; she felt redemption and was saved. We do not hear that she had prayed a word, or used any intreaties; no, perhaps she had never prayed in her life, and did not know how to speak for shame and trouble; but her heart prayed; Jesus heard the unutterable sighs of her heart, and her tears spoke the language of her thirsty and needy soul: And here
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it would not be amiss to observe, that when a poor oppressed soul cannot speak, or does not know how to pray, Jesus sees the bottom of the heart, and the desires and pantings of an awakened soul are of more weight with him than ten thousand fine words, or well composed prayers, or whole burnt-offerings or sacrifices. But to return: Jesus looked upon her, and said to Simon, "When I entered into thine house thou gavest me no water for my feet, but this woman has washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss, but she has not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but she has anointed my feet with ointment." None who stood by could have supposed that the Lord had taken any notice of the woman; but when they saw him speaking to Simon, and pursuing his discourse to those who sat at meat with him, it seemed as if he had not observed any thing she did: but see, he had duly remarked all, from first to last. His heart had yearned over her from everlasting, and all the days of her sinning his eyes watched over and longed to be gracious. He was come indeed to the world to save her among the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to bring her back to the Shepherd and Bishop of her soul; and neither was her desires and sighs for salvation any other than the effects of his own love. His Spirit had drawn her to him, and every tear she had shed he observed and counted. He felt her real grief, and her kissing his feet he noticed, and how she wiped them and anointed them with spikenard. All this is evident and clear, from his expostulation with Simon. It was all as if he had said, Simon, this woman, in the bottom of her heart, believes she is more indebted to me five hundred times than thou art: She knows her sins are

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many, and her faults innumerable; it is therefore the glad news of mercy is such a gospel to her, therefore she cleaves to me so close for help; therefore she is so ashamed and humbled, and now when I forgive her she loves me more. When I came into thy house, how coldly was I received? 'Thou gavest me no kiss to welcome me. O hadst thou known the want of a Saviour, or believed what a guest thou hast this day with thee,' thou wouldest not, thou couldest not have forbore to kiss me. Thou wouldest have fallen down at my feet and wondered at that, mercy of mercies, and thought the God of the whole earth comes to me! But this poor woman, whom Satan and her lusts have led captive these many years, see how glad she is of a Saviour, how thankful and happy she is at my feet! How have I been welcomed by her! Since I came in, she has not ceased to kiss my feet. 'Thou also gavest me no water to wash my feet. The reason was, Thou hast not known that all the angels have rejoiced to wait on me: Thou hast not known who I, the Son of man, am, or thou wouldest have counted it the greatest honour to be my servant and wash my feet: But this woman, whom thou so despisest, knows me; my Father in heaven has taught her, and therefore she cometh to me. See how her tears are poured out on my feet, and how she wipes them with the hair of her head! How is that proud spirit of the harlot humbled in the dust! How is that head (once lifted up haughty and whorish, deckt with ornaments and finery to allure men to sin with her) abased at my feet! Those eyes, which once darted impure flame, now see how they are fountains, and ashamed to look up. Her all, her very precious ointment, she bestows upon my feet, and loves me much, because much is forgiven her. Think only, Simon, if I should par-

den thee with thy few sins, and her with her many, how little love or thanks I should get from thee, and how much from her : In this thou errest, and supposest that thou hast but a little to be forgiven ; whereas thou, in thy heart and in thy nature, art the same sinner ; and thy hypocrisy and pride are as abominable in my eyes, as her uncleanness and lewdness have been.

“ And he said to her, Thy sins are forgiven.” It is remarkable we do not hear that Simon asked this mercy, or that Jesus ever said thus to him ; but it appears rather as if he continued yet offended, and reasoned with the rest, if he did not blaspheme in saying, “ Thy sins are forgiven.”

It seems as if Simon had heard and seen the piety of our Saviour, and respected him upon that account ; perhaps he had thought, this man may do a great deal of good to the vile and common people, and others, who are not of the strict sect of the pharisees ; but, doubtless, he did not receive him as if he himself wanted his help, or to be saved by him : No, he expected rather Jesus should praise him for his strict life, and with scorn and contempt, and with threatenings, reduce to obedience. He, no doubt, was conscious of his failing in some points, but he thought it was but a little : He was like the rest of that sort, who “ thanked God that he was no drunkard, extortioner, &c. nor even like the publicans ;” and this made him receive our Saviour and his doctrine so coldly : Had he only been truly convinced of sin, and seen how all sins come out of the heart, and that our whole nature is corrupt and abominable, and our best works and duties are spoiled and stained with sin, he certainly had not so behaved. He would not have thought of any being greater sinners than himself ; but, knowing his own wicked heart, and the secret

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stirring of lust and pride, he would have met our Saviour with a heart overflowing with joy, and kissed his feet, and thanked him, that he would bring salvation into his house, and help and save him from all his sin.

On the other hand, the only reason why the woman received him so thankfully was, she knew her lost state, she had no false righteousness to depend on, she wanted a Saviour ; and now she had found him, she worships him, kisses his feet, weeps, and is overcome with joy.

As bread to a man dying with hunger is sweet, and water to one perishing with thirst, so is a Saviour's presence and his tender mercies to a soul conscious of his sin, and who is awakened in his heart, and has for ever done attempting to clear himself, or persuade himself that he is good or righteous, but knows I am undone, and spoiled, and lost, unless God Almighty, through free mercy, look upon me and 'save me. O no tongue can express how much such long to have our Saviour turn to them and say, "Thy sins, that are many, are forgiven thee." If any among you, who hear me to-day, are in this case, if you feel your sin, and want a Saviour, draw near and fall before the Son of man : "It is a true saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Do not be affrighted because you cannot pray rightly, or as some can ; you want a Saviour the more : Look how the woman did, and go and do likewise. Let your tears and sighs speak the language of your heart, and know the God with whom you have to do, the Lamb to whom you come has eyes like a flame of fire. He sees your hearts, and knows better what you want than you know yourselves. You must not think he loves long prayers, or will hear because of your much speaking.

speaking. He tries the heart and the reins, and listens to the softest aspirations and sighs for mercy. Open your breasts before him continually, and this you can do as well in the field, in the shop, in the house, in the bed, or with company, or alone, or sick, or in health, as if you were on your knees in the closet, or praying in the great congregation. This is to pray ^aalways. Do this then, and leave not the other undone, and you shall find what a heart Jesus has. When he had a mind to save this poor woman, for a while he seemed as if he did not see her, and behaved as if he did not regard her tears and kisses ; but how happy an answer did she at last obtain : "Go in peace, thy faith has saved thee, thy sins are forgiven." Just so when Saul was awakened in his journey to Damascus, for a time he seemed to be forsaken and disregarded, and this so pained him, that he could neither eat or drink till God hastened away Ananias to him with the glad news of his sins^a being washed away. When Ananias would have pleaded with Jesus against going, because he was afraid of him, he says to him, "Make haste, for behold he prayeth ;" as if he would have said, I cannot bear his sighs, and his tears, and cries ; make haste, I must help him : Tell him to arise and wash away his sins, "calling upon the name of the Lord." It has been our dear Saviour's manner of acting ; he hides his face and we are troubled ; but he says, "For a little moment have I hid myself from thee, but with everlasting mercies will I gather thee." Be not therefore discouraged ; whatever your circumstances are, however you are distressed or burthened, whatever fears or doubts trouble you, bring all to the feet of Jesus Christ, and there abide till he has said in your heart, "Thy sins are forgiven ;" till, like Mary, you

can weep for joy, and kiss his feet here and in eternity.

But before I conclude this discourse, I shall speak upon this doctrine of forgiveness of sin, and prove, that we receive forgiveness of our sin in this world, and that we can most surely know our sins are forgiven.

Above all things, I wonder that men who read the scripture daily, and hear it read continually, venture to affirm, we must not expect to be forgiven in this world; and if we are forgiven here, yet we cannot know it. I know well this doctrine pleases our common enemy; for this may settle some upon their lees, almost persuaded to be christians: and others never concern themselves about looking after pardon, since it cannot be found in this world; and so when they come to die (they think) it will be time enough for them. Unbelief and pure infidelity is at the bottom of the whole; else, as remission of sin is so often promised to him that believeth in the scripture, men would not dare say we cannot obtain it here in this world, but with all earnestness would seek it and find it.

St. Peter says, "Through this Man's name, whosoever believeth shall receive remission of sins," Acts x. 43. Again he says, "The promise of forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, is unto you and unto your children, and unto them that are far off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call," Acts ii. 38, 39. The scriptures were therefore written, and the gospel preached, that we might repent and believe, and have our sins blotted out; and it is the blessedness of which David in the Psalms, and St. Paul in the epistle to the Romans, speaks of, when they say, "Blessed is that man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose

whose sins are covered," Psalm xxxii. Rom. iv. 7. Isaiah's prophecy, and that of Ezekiel's too, are filled with promises of this kind; and David certainly knew it fulfilled in himself, when he says, "Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin," Psalm xxxii. 5. And again, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thy infirmities," Psalm ciii. 3. The angel told Isaiah, "Thy iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged," Isaiah vi. 7. Hezekiah says, "The Lord, out of love to my soul, has cast all my sins behind his back," Isaiah xxxviii. 17. To Joshua it was said, "Behold, I have caused thy iniquity to pass from thee," Zech. iii. 4. So to the man sick of the palsy, Jesus said, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee," Mark ii. 5. St. Paul says, "He has forgiven you all trespasses," Col. ii. 13. And again, "We have redemption in his blood, even the remission of our sins," Eph. i. 7. St. John says, "I have written to you because your sins are forgiven you," 1 John ii. 12. If our Saviour ever forgave sins he does now, and to the end of the world. The Son of man has not lost the power to forgive sins upon earth. He is the sole High-priest, and absolves, and washes, and makes clean whom he will. His blood has the same effect now, as formerly, to cleanse us from all sins; and as I said before, pure unbelief is the cause of any one's denying so precious a doctrine. The evasion some use, who say we may be forgiven and never know it, is insufferable. Can a loaded man be eased of his burden and he not know it? Can the prisoner be released and be ignorant of it? or the leper be cleansed and he not the wiser? Then is it all fancy, and not real; but if the sick, the leper, the heavy-laden, must know when they are delivered, so must the souls know when the Lord Jesus has

has done away their iniquity. The heart feels his words spirit and life, and rejoiceth that he has given them the knowledge of their salvation by the remission of their sins.

It would depreciate and undervalue the work of the Holy Ghost, to suppose he can apply the blood of Christ, wash and pardon a soul, and leave it insensible of the great mercy. Nor could we thank the Lord, or praise him for his grace, if we could not certainly know our sin is pardoned, and our transgression hid. It is this that makes us love our Saviour much, because we know he has forgiven us much.

I do not doubt at all, that many souls are sensible of a divine work upon their hearts, who feel often a joy which a stranger intermeddles not with, and who are enlightened by the Sun of righteousness, and comforted much, who nevertheless cannot say, I know my sins are forgiven; but then let not such rest till they can say it; and if they are sincere, and do not want to deceive themselves, they will not rest till all the promises are fulfilled to them. They will not cease to thirst, and to beseech our Saviour, like Mary at his feet, till they have heard him say, "Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee;" or till they can sing, "He has loved me, and washed me from my sins in his own blood."

Unbelief can really hurt us in this and all other matters of our Saviour's kingdom; and I therefore pray all who hear me, not to encourage or suffer the thought which clashes with the promises of God, or the experience of such who through faith have obtained pardon of their sins, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ. What signifies all the arguments brought against this doctrine by carnal men? Or why should we be moved when they ask,

ask, How can it be? and endeavour to prove it impossible for us now to receive so great mercy. If the scriptures are not true, and the apostles and first christians have been deceivers, or if the promises of our Saviour are no more to be depended upon, and his hand is shortened, and his ways altered, then may we hear them who oppose this truth; but if he be true, then let all who speak otherwise be liars; and as such promises are left us, let every one, with all his heart, seek to make his salvation sure, and resolve to sink before the once-pierced feet of God our Saviour, with prayers and tears, till he has said to us, as he did to the woman in the text, "Thy sins are forgiven;" with a confidence and assurance of this, we can live happy in this present life, and depart happy to the life to come. This only can make us meet the king of terrors valiantly, and go in peace through the valley of the shadow of death, because our sins are forgiven us, for his name's sake. God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us. Our unrighteousness is pardoned, and our iniquities covered; we are blessed, yea we shall be blessed for ever, since God, our own God and Saviour, has been merciful to our iniquities, and our sin he will remember no more. He has cast all our sins into the deep of the sea; the blood of the Lamb has washed them away. To him be glory, and salvation, and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

P R A Y E R.

O THOU loving and merciful Saviour, who out of mere pity to the children of men, once left thy everlasting throne and glory, and was made man for the sake of dying and redeeming them out of their lost estate, be pleased still to be gracious in the same way, and abide the friend of sinners. Take me to be thy child ; and behold me at thy feet, like Mary, begging for mercy and forgiveness, nor send me empty away, for thy name's sake. I am a poor sinner, who owes thee much ; for I have failed and sinned in all I have done ever since I was born ; I have no righteousness to plead, but as a guilty criminal before the bar, so stand I before the Judge of all the earth, whose eyes have tried and found me deserving eternal death. I have no excuse ; I have been disobedient and careless ; I have defiled my body and soul, and am ashamed to lift up my head. Lord ! I have nothing to pay, O freely forgive me all, and I will love thee much for ever and ever. Let those sharp and bitter pains of thine ease my heart, which else will be uneasy day and night. Let thy wounds heal the most diseased soul that ever prayed to thee ; and let thy bloody sweat, and those blessed streams which flowed out of thy crucified body, wash me and make me clean. Say to me, " Thy sins are forgiven thee ;" and let thy Holy Spirit, whom thou hast promised as the Comforter, assure my heart that all my sins are pardoned for ever, and shall no more come into thy remembrance. Forgive me that I have been so careless hitherto of my salvation, and have so contented myself without God in the world ; forgive my indifference

rence about my part in thee, and my coldness to thy sufferings and merits. O! have mercy upon me, and let me go comforted, and in thy peace to the grave. Be with me when my strength fails me, and lay thy everlasting arms under my head; when I am departing this life, be then nearer than ever, and let my latter end be better than the beginning! O do this, my dear Saviour, my Lord God and Redeemer, that I may bless thee and love thee eternally. Amen.

DISCOURSE XII.

THE MARRIAGE OF ISAAC.

GEN. xxiv. 31.

Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without?

WHEN Abraham was grown old, and desired to see his son Isaac married before his departure out of the world, and feared lest he should take a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites, he called his steward Eliezer, and sent him to the city of Nahor, in Mesopotamia, to seek there a wife for his son; and when the steward was come into that country, and found Rebekah by a well, without the gates of the city, he hoped God had sent her as an answer to his prayers. He inquired her name, and asked if there was room in her father's house, that he might lodge there? And Rebekah made haste to let her mother and brother Laban know that there was a stranger, with some young men and camels, waiting at the well, and who desired to lodge with them. I suppose she related to them what had passed, how she had seen him at first, when she went out for water, praying by the well, and calling upon the God of Abraham, and how kindly he had behaved to her, and given her a present of a costly frontlet or jewel, after she had watered his beasts, and how she observed him bowing down and worshipping

shipping the Lord God of his master, when she had told him whose daughter she was, and given him hopes that he might lodge in their house; from all which Laban could easily think he was not of the heathen, but of those who knew the Lord, and therefore glad to find one of that number (for such have always been few and rare in the world) he ran out to meet the good man, and began to salute and accost him in the words of my text, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord! wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house and room for the camels."

Throughout the whole account of this extraordinary transaction, and manner of bringing about the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah, there are some things to be observed, to our comfort and instruction, who live in this time of the New Testament grace, in these days of the Son of man.

I believe we should not be content to read the scriptures of patriarchal times merely as a true history. The Holy Ghost, doubtless, intended that all should preach Jesus Christ to us, though at that time but darkly, till the veil was taken away: But, according to St. Paul, all were shadows of him that was to come, namely, Jesus Christ our Saviour, the Husband and Spouse of our souls.

I will make observations on some passages, which in this history are handed down to us, and shew what a resemblance it has to the spiritual marriage of the Lamb and his church, with all the many circumstances that attend it.

I do not doubt but Abraham could have found women enough in the land of Canaan, where he dwelt, and wherein he was now rich, and a sort of prince among the people, equally as fair, and far more wealthy than in that land to which he sent his servant to get his son a wife; but he

loved that country: And though it was far off, and, perhaps, the inhabitants poor, yet he chose thence to fetch a bride for Isaac, and made his servant promise, and even swear to him, not to let his son marry one of the daughters of the land wherein he lived.

The servant was willing to do all his master would have him promise, but had one scruple, and that was, in case none of the country of Mesopotamia should be willing to leave their own land, or be persuaded to accept of the offer which he should make, and, on this account, cou'd not vow absolutely to obey him: therefore good old Abraham sacrificed him, and assured him in this case, he should be free from his oath.

The steward immediately promised to do all that lay in his power; and as all the goods of his master were in his hands, he took several young men with him, and ten camels, and went out in quest of the native country of his master.

The scripture observes, that when he came to the city or town of Nahor, he did not rashly enter into it, (so much he had learned of Abraham, who once in faith went out, not knowing whither he went, till God brought him into that good land,) but depending upon the Lord God of his master, he stopped by a well, without the town, and rested his camels, and prayed to be directed in choosing the right person, the woman that the Lord would have for Isaac's wife; nay, he went so far as to pray, that when the maids of the place should come out for water, and he should ask one for leave to drink at her pitcher, the Lord should make that a sign to him, that if she was the right person, she should give him willingly, and offer his camels water also. He had not ended his prayer before Rebekah came in sight with her pitcher

pitcher upon her shoulder ; and when she had filled it at the well, he asked her for leave to drink, and she readily consented, and said, “ Drink, and I will draw water for thy camels also.”

The simplicity and piety of the steward, as well as the condescension of the Most High, is here to be admired. What do reasoning and unbelieving men lose for want of that child-like and honest heart, which once shone so clearly in ancient days ? We read these accounts with pleasure, and observe how simply the creature prays, and how graciously the Creator answers. O that we would always tread the steps of the former, and we should find the latter is the same. “ The Lord that changes not,” is his name. If in our minutest and less material matters, we implored his help, we should find him our God and guide to death, and he would direct and answer us in all things to our eternal comfort.

While Rebekah was watering the camels, and fulfilling the sign the steward had asked of God ; it is said, “ The man, wondering at her, held his peace, to see if the Lord had prospered his journey or not.” One should have thought he needed not to have doubted, but made his offers, and told his errand directly : Yet though he was not too eager, but waited upon the Lord to see what he would do, he took a golden ear-ring, or rather a jewel for the forehead, of great value, and two bracelets, and gave them to her, and asked “ Who she was ? and if he and his men could lodge at her father’s house ?” All this, as I observed before, she related to her parents and to her brother, who therefore met and invited him home to their house in that manner, “ Come in, thou blessed of the Lord,” &c. And when they had unloaded the camels and fod-

dered them, and washed the steward's feet, and the feet of his young men, they invited them to eat, but (see an instance of the steward's great faithfulness) he would not eat until he had told his errand. And he began and said, "I am Abraham's servant:" and, from first to last, related all what he had sworn to his master, and how he was come to get a wife for Isaac; how he had prayed by the well for direction in his choice of a fit person, and how it had gone with Rebekah, as an answer to his prayer: And now, added he, "Deal honestly with me, and say if you will let your daughter go with me; and if not, then will I search farther to the right hand or to the left: and both Bethuel her father, and Laban her brother, answered, It is of the Lord: Rebekah is before thee, take her to be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." When the steward heard this, he was so thankful that he had succeeded, that he bowed down to the earth, and worshipped the Lord. And now he opened his treasures, and gave her jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and fine raiment: He gave also to her mother and brother precious things, and they ate and drank, and tarried all night. In the morning, when the parents of Rebekah would have detained the steward, who was for hastening back to Canaan, and he pressed hard to have leave to depart, they asked their daughter, "Wilt thou go with this man?" As if they had said, Thou seest upon what conditions thou goest; thou hast a long journey before thee: thou must leave thy own relations and native country; thou art to go with this stranger into a foreign land; what wilt thou do? wilt thou go? "And she answered, I will go." And now the servant's heart must leap for joy, and be fully convinced how God had prospered his journey. And they sent
away

away Rebekah with her nurse Deborah, and some damsels her companions; and they blessed Rebekah in a tender manner, and she took leave, and came with the steward and the servants into the south country. And Isaac was out in the fields, about evening, praying. I suppose he was intreating the Lord to prosper his father's servant, and to preserve his bride on the journey, and let no evil befall them. And while he was speaking, he saw the camels coming, and Rebekah saw him at a distance, and asked the steward, "Who is it that comes to meet us?" and the steward told her, "It is my master Isaac. And she was ashamed, and alighted, and put a veil upon herself, and bowed down before him. And the steward told Isaac all that had passed; and Isaac took Rebekah and brought her into his mother's house, and she became his wife."

This is the substance of the sacred history, which I have repeated, the better to bring to your minds the circumstances of this marriage. And now I will speak of the real and eternal mystery of the marriage of the Lamb, from this of Isaac and Rebekah; which, however blessed and extraordinary, is yet, like all other pure marriages, but a figure of the true.

None must be offended, that I speak in such terms of the kingdom of God and our eternal salvation, or because I compare it to a wedding, &c. for our Saviour has himself made the comparison thus in many places of the New Testament. He says, "The kingdom of God is like Virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the Bridegroom," Matt. xv. Again, "The kingdom of God is like a marriage which a king made for his son; and he sent out his servants at supper-time,

time, to invite those that were bidden to the supper," &c. Matt. xxii. &c.

The matter is true and certain: The King is the God and father of our Lord Jesus, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. The Son is the only begotten of God, who is himself God the Creator, and Heir of all things, the Maker and Lord of all. This Son, begotten before all worlds, will celebrate an everlasting marriage with his creatures, and sends out his ministers, his stewards of the mysteries of his kingdom, and servants, to invite and bring in souls to the wedding: And, properly, this is the sole business of every true preacher of the gospel. The office Abraham's servant had is theirs also, only he was to get a wife for an earthly prince, but we for an heavenly, even the Prince of the kings of the earth. "Blessed are all they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb," Rev. xix. 9.

As Abraham might have took a wife for his son of the daughters of the land where he lived, perhaps more fair and rich than any in Mesopotamia, but would not, and chose rather, out of love to that far country, to fetch his daughter the wife of his son: So God, who, from all eternity, had designed the Lamb's marriage, might have chosen for him a wife among the inhabitants of heaven. There were many of the blessed angels who had kept their first estate, and were fairer and better than any of the children of men: Of these he might have thought good to elect the bride of Christ, or created him souls after his own heart, in perfect holiness and innocency, who could have been his spouse for ever: But here first appeared the tender mercy of God Almighty: He loved this world, and will have his ministers from hence call a people who shall be his Son's wife. He will send into this far country (and farther from him,
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in this our fallen estate, we cannot be, unless we were quite in hell) and invite souls to his supper: "Come in, he says, all things are ready, come to the marriage." This, then, is the office of a minister, to bring this glad news to a lost world? and should they not be able to persuade men, should they fail, or should the souls to whom the gracious offers of divine love are made, refuse, they (the ministers) shall be clear, like the steward of Abraham: but it would be better if the refusers had not been born. If the ministers, the watchmen, warn the people, and they will not hear, then shall the watchmen be free, and their blood shall be upon their own heads; this God had told the prophet Ezekiel long ago. But why do I speak thus? I hope better things of you, my brethren, and things that accompany salvation. I hope you rejoice at the good news of the redemption, and are ready to follow the Lamb. O that not one of you may be wanting when the trumpet shall proclaim the marriage of the Lamb is come. May you and I, in that day, be like virgins betrothed to him; virgins, as himself expresses it, "with our lamps burning, and having on the wedding-garment, that when he shall open, we may enter into the wedding-chamber, and go no more out.

A servant of Jesus Christ, a minister of the gospel, should learn somewhat of the servant of Abraham. For, first, see how ready he was at his master's word, to go out, nor appears unwilling to undertake the journey, or undergo any trouble or pains, so he might but please his lord? and, even when he came to the place, from whence he should take a wife for his master's son, he first looks up to the God of his master, on whose blessing he alone depended; and yet farther, when all things
seemed

seemed to succeed, and he was come into the house, and welcomed in so civil and joyful a manner, and a feast was prepared, his heart was too faithful to forget his business; he could not, he would not eat till he had told his errand, and made it sure that Rebekah should go with him. O that thus every minister would behave! Their work is of much greater weight and consequence than this of the steward, and their office more divine and sacred. What servant or witness of our Saviour then, who knows what it has cost their Lord and Master to ransom souls, can think much of leaving all that he has, undertaking journeys, passing through many troubles, fatigues, difficulties, evil and good reports, and even spending his days in pain and labour, and wearing out himself in the business, if, after all, he can but be the happy means of bringing some to the marriage? Let them know then who their master is, nor rashly run forward without their errand, or be wearied in his work. Let them follow Abraham's steward in this respect; and make their prayer to the Lord, to direct and prosper, and bless them in their office, for else they may preach till his second coming, and not win one soul to his kingdom. Just so it happened once to some of his disciples, who were fishers, and whom he intended to make fishers of men? without him they had toiled and rowed the whole night, and caught nothing; but when he came to them, and they had let down the net at his word, they inclosed such a number of fishes, that their net brake, and all their boats were filled with fish. This miracle of our Saviour's taught them afterwards in their better fishery, "that without him they could do nothing." But as surely as a servant of the Lord goes out in his name, and with his blessing, he shall find his Master's presence with him to the end of the

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the world : And when he invites the souls to come to the marriage, he shall make them a willing people, and their hearts shall answer to the minister's joy, "I will go." A minister must learn something more, namely, that part of his office which intitles him to the name of a watchman : As Abraham's servant waited by the well, and as a fisherman waits for the shoals of fish, and is contented to be out in all storms, rains, heats, colds, and inclement weather, only that he may succeed and prosper, so should a minister of the Lord Christ watch for souls, and remember, to his last hour, he must not be a lord over them, nor master, nor head, but he is a servant, and like his High-Priest, must be among them as one that serves. He should be ready in season and out of season, and endure hardships as a good soldier, waiting for the blessed time of bringing many to the Saviour, and filling his house with guests. Such faithful men may be despised in their day, and esteemed mean and foolish, and persecutions may thwart and hinder them for a while, but let them follow the Captain of their salvation ; let them take up his cross and reproach, and go out of the camp after him ; and esteem whatever they can suffer for his sake, an honour, so they may but finish their course with joy, and hear the Lord say to them, in that day, "Well done." This shall amply reward them for all.

But to return ; as soon as the steward had received an answer to his prayer, and Rebekah had done watering her camels, he gave her a jewel for the forehead, and bracelets for her hands, of fine gold ; just so when our Saviour takes hold of the heart, and a sinner comes to him, he also bestows the antetype of this jewel. He gives the "mark of the Lamb in the forehead," the seal of his Holy Spirit,

Spirit, which no man knows but him that receives it. He puts his mark upon the sheep that he had lost, and says, Thou art mine; their hands lay hold on eternal life, and a joy springs up in the heart which shall have no end. Scarce had Rebekah received this present, but she ran to acquaint her brother and her father's house of her good luck, and this was one chief reason of Laban's meeting the steward afterwards with that pretty salutation. He saw the bracelets on his sister's arms, and the jewel upon her forehead, and received him into the house joyfully, with "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord!" It is common for a new-born soul, when he has found mercy, and knows his sins are forgiven, and that our Saviour has marked and sealed him to the day of redemption, that he goes and tells his friends and dear relations what the Lord has done for him, and how God has had compassion on him. "Come hither," can he say, like David, "all you that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul." Would to God that all that hear me to-day, knew what this frontlet meant, this mark of the Lamb in their forehead, and could go hence to all their pious acquaintance, and relate to them, I have found the Lord; I have got redemption in his blood: I am his, and he is mine; he has written upon me his new name.

The hospitality and kindness wherewith the whole family of Bethuel received the steward, is not to be passed over in silence: It should teach us to be glad to receive into our houses the children of God, and such as bear his name, or confess him; for thus some have entertained angels unawares? and thus this act of civility became afterwards a blessing and happiness to the whole family. But I must once more commend the faithfulness of
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the steward: he would not eat till he had delivered his message; he did not want their food and raiment, their silver or gold, he wanted to have them become rich and happy through their kindred to Abraham. He wanted to make their daughter a princess, and an honour in the land, and thus far he succeeded. And now, my dear brethren and sisters, I must let you know, also, my errand to you to day. I am the Lord, the God of Abraham's servant; my Master is over all in heaven and earth; ten thousand times ten thousand worship before him, and all lay their crowns down at his feet. He is Lord of all; but he has a Son whom he has appointed Heir of all things, and by whom all worlds were made, who is the Maker, Redeemer, and Preserver of men, and who is now about to celebrate his everlasting marriage in the kingdom of God. I come now to get a wife for my Master, among you. O think as if I asked one by one Wilt thou go? Jesus Christ, my Master, the eternal Son of God, chooses poor sinners to be his bride; he delights to dwell with the children of men. He loves us with everlasting love; and therefore left all his holy angels, his ministring spirits, the thrones and principalities, and comes down from heaven to earth to call you to his marriage. This is no similitude, no parable, no likeness or figure, but this is a real and solid truth, you may be the bride, the Lamb's wife. You poor people, who have long lived without him in the world, and have been careless and at ease in Sion: Ye unhappy souls, who have lived a profane and wicked life; ye distressed and forsaken wretches who are weary and heavy laden, come ye to the marriage: All things are ready, come, and he will in no wise cast you out. Ho! ye sensualists, ye lovers of the world and pleasure! ye who have spent
whole

whole days and nights in your lusts, and have loved the tabret and music in your feasts: Ye drunkards, whoremongers, adulterers, and unclean, there is yet room; ye may come to the marriage. Ye who sit and sigh for mercy, ye who are pained at the heart, and would give the world to be saved, whose souls are awakened, and concerned about the redemption, in the name of Jesus, the Son of God, I invite you to the marriage. In the name of Jesus I offer you, Will you be his bride? Will you go to him? Why then, lo, all things are ready; God the Father is ready to meet thee, to fall upon thy neck and kiss and pardon thee. God the Son, thy Maker, is ready to be thy husband; his righteousness shall be thy wedding-garment, and his white robe shall dress thee. God the Holy Ghost is ready to seal thee to the day of redemption, to bear witness in thy heart, thou art a child of God. The blood of Jesus is ready to wash thee; the wounds of Jesus are ready to heal thee; the grave of Jesus is ready to bury and hide all thy sins; the napkin he left behind is ready to wipe the tears from thy eyes: the angels are ready to rejoice over thee; a place is ready for thee in heaven; all things are ready; only let thy heart be ready, only be thou able to sing like David, "O God, my heart is ready;" and then nothing is wanting; "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without?" come in and be saved eternally.

Nothing seemed so to offend and grieve the King in the parable, as that some made their excuses; one had too much business on his hands, another had his farm and oxen to mind, and another loved his wife more than him, and prayed to be excused: such are the trifling excuses all men make in our days. One supposes none has such cares and vexations

atious people round about him as he. Another thinks it is very well for people who, having nothing else to do, to follow Jesus, and be devoted wholly to him; but for him, he thinks, I am in trade, I must mind my business and be diligent; I must conform to the world, and have no spare time, I hope God will not require it of me. Alas! poor man, what does he require? he only would have thee saved for ever. He only would make thee happy in the bride-chamber to eternity. Take care, lest it be said once to thee, "Thou hast loved house and land, &c. better than me," and thou be indeed excused from coming to his supper. But the most foolish and inexcusable of all, are they who think I am married, and therefore I cannot come. These are of two sorts, such as love husband and wife, or children, more than our Saviour, and such as being cumbered with concern for their maintenance, hope to be excused thereby before God. The former should resolve like St. Austin, and every true believer, rather to leave father and mother, and husband, and wife, and children, than not be Christ's disciple: The latter while he takes care for the body and bread that perishes, should have a double concern for the bread that endureth to eternal life. His chief aim should be to come himself to our Saviour, and bring his children and wife with him, that so, when he should give an account of things done in the body, before the judgment-seat, he might say with joy, as our Saviour did, in another sense, "Here are the children thou hast given me, and I have lost none." How happy are those parents who can answer thus!

But how ill our Saviour takes it, of all such as go about to frame excuses in this weighty matter, and how dangerous it is, may be seen in the gospel, where the king is said to be angry with them, and

said, "not one of them shall taste of my supper." O then awake, ye souls, who have thought on making an excuse, and hear the alarm; rise up and follow him; and be determined, at all hazards, at the loss of all things, to have the Lord for your Husband, and come follow the Lamb to the supper.

How many excuses might Rebekah have framed, if she had been unwilling to go to Isaac? She might have thought, Isaac is a prince in the land, and I am unfit to be his wife; I have been brought up in a plain servant-like manner; I have lived as an hand-maid in my father's house, and have nothing wherein to appear before Isaac, becoming his bride; therefore had Isaac sent her fine raiment to make her fit; and jewels of silver and jewels of gold, to adorn her as a bride for the bridegroom. Just so you complain: Ah! I am unfit to be our Saviour's bride; I have been a servant to the world and the devil: my best righteousness is sin and filthy rags; how then should I venture to appear before him, who am vile dust and ashes! How shall I bow myself before him whose eyes can see no iniquity? Why, therefore, has thy dear Redeemer, thy heavenly Isaac, prepared his blood to wash thee and make thee clean, and without spot or wrinkle before him? His righteousness shall be a robe to thee, and his salvation thy fine linen, thy wedding-garment: This is the righteousness of the saints; in this thou shalt be fair, altogether fair, and no spot in thee. In this raiment, all glorious within, shalt thou be brought to the King, and he shall have pleasure in thy beauty. His merits shall be to thee better than jewels of silver and jewels of gold; and thou shalt be perfect through the comeliness which he shall put upon thee. Do not be afraid, only believe, and draw near and come.

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But Rebekah could have made another objection : She could have thought, The way is long, I shall not be able to walk to Canaan : I shall neither find my way, nor have strength to travel so far : Therefore had Isaac sent her a guide to shew her the way, and camels to carry her. You may also think, O, I do not know the way to heaven ; and did I know how to get thither, I am afraid I should never have strength to hold out ; I should sit down weary on this side Jordan, and never reach the New Jerusalem, the land of Canaan : Therefore, Jesu's everlasting arms, his shoulders, and bosom, and his dear wounds, shall be thy chariot. This is that spoken of in Solomon's song, " It is paved with love, and lined with purple, fit for the daughters of Jerusalem." He travelled and was weary, that thou mightest hold out to the end, and be saved. He was fatigued and faint, that thou mightest run and not be weary, and walk, and not faint. He will carry the lambs in his bosom, and bear thee upon his shoulders, till thou art at home. His holy scriptures, and his spirit shall guide thee. He shall lead you into all truth. " The Lord himself will be thy God and guide unto death."

Rebekah could yet have reasoned, I am now adorned with jewels and fine raiment, but, perhaps on my journey, robbers may assault me, and take all away ; or wild beasts fall upon me in the wilderness, and tear me to pieces, therefore had Isaac sent her a company of young men to guard her, and keep off every enemy. When you reflect, I am afraid Satan will rob me of all again, or come upon me like a roaring lion, and devour me, then know, Jesus has commanded his angels to encamp round about thee. As when Jacob went out, God's host went out with him, so it shall be with thee ; the angels shall wait upon thee, and keep off every
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danger, till they have landed thee above, with songs of everlasting joy. The Arch-Angel, the Angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, goes before thee. He shall not leave thee, nor forsake thee in this howling wilderness. He will bear thee up ; be of good comfort ; only come, and all shall be well.

But Rebekah could still have objected, I am now to pass through a country strange and barren, and may die with want by the way ; therefore had Isaac sent camels laden with provision of the best things of the land of Canaan. And when thou objectest, I am here in a dry land where no water is, in a desert country, where is a famine to the soul, then know, Jesus has provided for it. He who led Israel through the wilderness, and rained upon them manna, and clave the hard rock, and gave them water as out of the springing well, has, in like manner, prepared for thee a table in the wilderness of this world. His flesh shall be thy daily, thy super-substantial bread, and his blood shall be thy drink indeed. This shall be to thee like the widow's cruse of oil and her meal, it shall never fail. Thou shalt eat and live for ever, and drink of this brook by the way, and lift up thy head. This is the true bread which came down from heaven, and gives life to the world. He has prepared for thee the fruit of the tree of life, and wine that rejoiceth the heart of God and man.

But still if Rebekah had been loth to leave any thing, she might have said, How shall I part with my own pleasant country, or leave my companions, the damsels, and my nurse, whom I have loved ? How shall I bid farewell to my mother and my brother, and go away ? Why, therefore had Isaac sent her jewels and provisions better and more desirable than what her own country yielded ; and by all the tokens of favour and grace, he made her

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her assured he would be better to her than father and mother, or brethren and sisters; and for her companions she had no need to leave them; he had sent her many camels, that she might bring with her many others of her companions, and thereby signified there was room for all. So canst thou think about leaving the world, thy friends, thy companions, and pleasures, &c. But O look up and see what a country thou art going to possess; one taste of the powers of the world to come, one glimpse of the city of the first-born shall make thee for ever remember thou art herè a stranger, and thy home and thy house is in a better world; nor grieve too much if thy father should disown thee, or she that bare thee should hate thee; should thy brethren or thy sisters despise thee, take it not hard, do not be discouraged, for when thy father or mother forsake thee, the Lord shall take thee up. He will be better than ten fathers; thou shalt have in him a hundred fold in this world, and in the world to come, eternal life. And thy pleasures they are only for a season, but the pleasures at God's right hand are for evermore. If thou hast companions or friends, that thou lovest, or such as are dear to thee, thou hast no need to leave them; but Jesus himself tells thee, "There is room," bring them along with thee, and Jesus will receive them all, with a "Come in, ye blessed of the Lord." If they have been companions in sin, if ye have walked with them in the paths of death, O then invite them to come with you to the kingdom of God. The same wounds that made you an open door into the marriage, shall receive them in too; the same mouth that calls you, calls them also. The same arms stretched out to embrace you, are open to embrace them. It is a glorious, a sufficient and infinite salvation; there is room
enough

enough for all the world, and all things are ready, therefore I pray you come to the marriage: "Come in, ye blessed of the Lord," ye dear souls, who hunger and thirst after redemption and righteousness; and whoever waits like a beggar at the door, poor in spirit, and vile and unworthy in your own eyes, "Come in, wherefore do you stand without?" there is room for you; 'come in and be saved.

Let me reason with you, as Abraham's servant did with Rebekah's relations: He said, "Tell me if your daughter shall go; or if not, let me go in search farther to the right hand or to the left?" So I say to you: 'Tell me, what answer shall I carry back to the Lord my Master? Shall I return weeping, and bring him the heavy tidings, Lord, they will not come? "They all began with one accord to make excuse;" they made light of it. It was nothing to them that the King of heaven and earth offers them marriage; that they are redeemed by his own blood; and that he comes himself, and has sent his prophets, rising early, and his apostles and ministers, now in the end of the world, to pray them to be reconciled. What say ye? Shall I go farther in quest of souls, because ye have no mind to be saved, or have so many objections? O no! methinks I hear you say, "I will go." Ask your hearts, Are you willing to be the spouse and sister of Jesus, the King's daughter? Do your hearts burn within you to follow him? Do you want to have him kiss you with the kisses of his love, and to put the ring upon your finger, and let that day come, when you no more shall call him "my Lord only, but my Husband;" Hosea ii. 16. Then know, assuredly, ye shall soon hear the singing and music in the heavenly house, and have the happiness of being brought

brought to the King. Here ye shall know and feel his love, but there ye shall see him, and go out no more for ever. O Lord, let that day come quickly!

When Rebekah drew near to Abraham's house, and she saw Isaac coming out to meet her, she asked, "Who it was?" and the steward said, "It is my Master; and immediately she alighted from her camel, and took a veil and covered herself, and bowed down to the ground before him; and he took her and brought her to his mother's house, and she became his wife." And now all her journies and dangers were over; now the joy of being with her husband had swallowed up all fears and troubles for ever; and all that her husband has is her's; also she is joint heir with him. So, by and by, shall it be with you, ye blessed souls, who now are resolved to be his in body and soul: very soon your journies, and pains, and tears shall come to an eternal end; and when your strength fails you, and you are ready to expire, like Stephen, you shall lift up your eyes and see Jesus coming out to meet you: he that has prayed for thee, thou poor sinner, and made intercession with strong cries and tears, and in a bloody and shameful death ransomed thee, shall come out to welcome thee in. O what wilt thou think when thou seest him, and when it shall be told thee, That is thy Master; that is the face which was once marred more than any man's; that is the Lamb who took away thy sin; those are the arms that were once bound to the cross, which now are stretched out to embrace and caress thee; that is the King's Son, who hath betrothed thee to himself, in his loving kindness, and mercy, and righteousness? I say, what wilt thou think, or what wilt thou do? I know thou wilt alight and cover thy face for joy and shame, and fall

fall down before him, while he shall say to thee, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord!" Come and enter thy Master's joy; I have prepared room for thee in my Father's house, and for the virgins that are thy fellows. O what shall we feel when we first see the Lamb of God face to face! How ashamed shall we be at our unworthiness to be his bride! How glad that he is so loving and merciful! All the comforts which we have inwardly possessed in believing on him, all the secret raptures and inconceivable sweets in his presence, here in this world, shall be nothing, in comparison of what we shall then feel when we see him, when he shall speak to us and we to him. We shall then confess, with the queen of Sheba, when she saw the glory of Solomon, "The one half of it was not told me in my own country!" O let none here make light of it; come to this marriage to which God himself invites you; and join with me to beseech our Saviour, the Bridegroom and Head of all our souls, that we soon together may sit down at this marriage supper, and be for ever and ever with him. Grant this, O Jesus Christ, thou Son of God, for thy precious blood and death's sake. Amen.

VILLAGE DISCOURSES

ON

Important Subjects :

**PARTICULARLY ADAPTED TO DOMESTIC
WORSHIP.**

BY THE LATE

REVEREND JOHN CENNICK.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

Revised and enlarged,

AND A RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE,

BY

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PART III.

DISCOURSE XIII.

THE TWO COVENANTS.

HEB. vii. 7.

If the First Covenant had been faultless, then should no Place have been sought for the Second.

NO one who reads the scripture can be ignorant that there is frequent mention made of two Covenants, or Testaments, namely, the Old and the New. The First Covenant was made in the wilderness, at the time of God's bringing up the Israelites out of Egypt, and is the law or Covenant of works. The Second Covenant is that made in Christ Jesus, and is the gospel, or Covenant of grace, or, as it is at other times called, the Covenant of promise.

The apostles and servants of God in all latter ages have called this Covenant of grace the New Covenant, or the Second Covenant, though it was indeed the First, and revealed to Abraham, and confirmed to him and his seed four hundred and thirty years before the law came into the world; and the Covenant of the law, or what is properly the Covenant of works, came in between the time of God's blessing Abraham and the coming of the Messiah. The reason, then, why the Covenant of works is called the first, is, because it was the first that was manifested and written, and under which all seem

to be born, and by which they hope to be helped and saved ; but this hope dies away as soon as the preaching of the pure gospel comes, and so soon as the Holy Ghost opens the law, and shews how indeed it is just and good, but because of the sinfulness of our nature, cannot justify, but condemns all under it, and is therefore called weak and unprofitable, since it shews sin, but cannot pardon it ; it makes the debt clear, and is as a just bond and bill, bringing in the soul guilty, but does not help to pay the debt, or justify the ungodly. The end of it was to make sin known, to put bounds to the torrent of transgressions, and check the rebellious sinner with its thunders, and, like a school-master, keep under the soul till it comes to age ; i. e. arrives to faith in Christ, and so long serves to teach us two things, first, That all the world is guilty before God, and must not think his ways are unequal, or that injustice is in him, in passing judgment and condemnation upon all in Adam, or use such a proverb any more, which once the reasoning and dissatisfied Israelites used, namely, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge," meaning, that Adam had sinned, and they were punished for his faults. In the law, therefore, God Almighty condescends to shew how little right they have to murmur on this head, and makes his just dealings clear as the light, in entering thus, as it were, into a covenant with all his creatures. He gives a holy law, and orders every one to be strictly obedient to all its precepts, with the promise of life and many blessings if they obey him, and curses "every one that continueth not in all things of the book of the law." These were the conditions of this Covenant or Testament. "If thou keep all my statutes and judgments to do them, I will bless thee ; but if thou despise my law that I have

have commanded, thou shalt be accursed, or die without mercy."

Here every child can see the ways of the Lord are equal, and not without cause all are condemned, and every one's mouth must be stopped, and complain and repine no more at the curse passed upon all, for all have sinned, and so brought the malediction and curse of the law upon their heads justly.

The second thing we learn in the law is, that we cannot be justified by it ; but the more we look into it, and the more we read it, the more we are convinced we are cut off from mercy thereby, and so the sincere soul dies to the law ; and though before it was like a husband to them, they now look on it as a dead husband, and what can help them no farther : And this happens ere the soul is free to be married to Christ, or even seeks out to him for mercy and justification. Thus by the law we are dead to the law, and this school-master has taught us, we cannot by the deeds of the law, or by our obedience or works be justified, seeing we have broken that covenant, and rendered our duty and obedience imperfect, and fallen under the curse ; " for he that keeps the whole law, and offends but in one point, is guilty of the whole."

Thus is the law a school-master until Christ, and when we seek righteousness there, the law answers us, It is not in me.

It is above all things most safe to understand the doctrine of the law, lest we be tempted in hearing the gospel to say that God gave it in vain, or being ignorant of its deep extent and meaning, endeavour to patch up a righteousness of our own from an observance of the law, and so live and die without seeking a better righteousness, and without knowing " the Covenant of promise, and eternal life, and

better blessings of the New Testament, in the blood of Jesus Christ." There was never more need of a caution against this danger than now, for out of a false zeal and pretended respect to the law of God, some have magnified it above our Saviour, and made it still the rule and tenor of all their preaching, whereby their hearers have been led blindfold, and unable to discern between works and faith, the law and grace, Moses and Christ, and blended both shamefully together, and made both one and the same covenant of God, and by resting on their duties and performances under the law, without being aware of their being under the curse, hazard- ing their souls' well-being for ever, and have come into the danger of being found children of the bond- woman, who, like servants, must not abide in God's house alway, but be cast out, while such as " were made free from the law by the body of Christ, and were received into the adoption of sons," shall be heirs for ever in the kingdom, and shall go no more out.

The Covenant of grace, or the New Testament, is of quite another nature than the law : for in this God the whole Godhead enters into a Covenant with the Son our Saviour, who, out of mere pity and love to sinners in their helpless and condemned condition, undertook for them, and became their Surety and Saviour. He knew well they were fallen, and lost, and gone captive after the enemy, who led them at his will. He foresaw what it would cost him to redeem them out of this estate, what pain and torment he must undergo, if he would sustain and bear their just chastisement and wrath, and how taste death for every man, if he would recover them and save their souls alive. He knew beside what trouble he should have to new- build the world, which was accursed on their ac- count,

count, and with what toil he should renew and create afresh all mankind, and wash them from their sins and evils, and bear all their sickness, death, judgments with every weight, pressure, grief, and burden, away; but all could not abate or change his fixed and everlasting love to the world; he willingly consented to be their Saviour, by paying their debt, suffering their curse, and making himself a free-will offering in their stead; for this he was to have "the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession:" Besides, the Father would preserve him, of the tribes of Jacob, a hundred and forty and four thousand, who should be, as it were, his first-fruits, and who should surely be his. At the same time "all things were made over to him in the height above, and in the deep beneath;" for his hire and wages he should be the Lord of all, whether living or dead, as well as have the sole supremacy in heaven, earth, hell, and over all flesh and every spirit in worlds visible and invisible, and have the authority and right to save as many as he would, and give eternal life to whom he pleased. This satisfied our blessed Surety, and the covenant was made of "God in Christ before the foundation of the world," when as yet no mountain or high hill was formed, and the present multitude of men and other creatures were not created, but only "He who calls the things that are not as though they were," knew how he would make man, and foresaw the fall by means of the subtlety of the enemy, and resolved to save them; thus from the beginning of the world he was the Lamb slain, and our Saviour. This covenant was witnessed and sworn to above, and was sealed by the Lord's own blood in due time, and put in force and perfected when he said in his last moments, "It is finished." From that hour it takes date, and all other dispensations,

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sations, covenants, bonds, laws, and engagements vanish away, and this of right should only be preached and published in the name of Jesus over the earth, till he comes.

I have in few words spoke of this glorious agreement above, which was made in the council of the Holy Trinity, and which, when known among the angels and sons of God, made all sing together and shout for joy. Let us now see how we stand in respect of this covenant, and by what means we are intitled to this act of grace and mercy.

We are saved freely, and therefore we do not possess our pardon and assurance of eternal life through our works or merits, but by faith in Christ. God becomes our Father, and we commence "his children, his sons, and daughters. We have nothing to pay, and he frankly forgives us all. He is merciful to our unrighteousness, and our sins and our iniquities he will remember no more. He justifies us from all our sins, though we be ungodly," and have no personal right to his justification, but he is merciful and just in doing so; merciful, in that he willingly pardons and loves us; just, in that Christ has died and suffered in our stead. He has borne our curse, he has endured our shame, sustained our hell and punishment, and imputes our faith in him for righteousness, or makes over and reckons his obedience, works, duties, sufferings, and dying to us; and as he stood like a sinner, and was numbered with transgressors before God, and was bruised for the sin he never committed, so we stand perfect and complete in him, being cloathed in his righteousness, which is imputed to us, though we did not deserve it, but were unworthy of any thing better than hell, and to be lost for ever.

This doctrine is every where taught in the gospel, and whoever believes it in the bottom of his heart,

heart, shall know, "he believes to righteousness," and shall feel and prove in his believing heart, that he is interested in the covenant of grace, and has a right to all the blessings and privileges of the sons of God contained therein. The Holy Spirit is sent down from heaven to be the witness of this, who so powerfully acts in the name of Jesus, and with such real and solid happiness and energy, that it is equally the same blessed thing to a believer, as if Christ personally gave him his blood, and said, "Drink, for this is the cup of the New Testament in my blood which was shed for you, for the remission of your sins."

Therefore above all things faith is requisite in us, and without which we can neither please God, overcome the world, or be justified from sin and the law. It is through faith in Jesus we get that righteousness and perfect holiness in Christ, which we never ~~eye~~ could have attained to by working; and by this faith we are brought into the possession of our inheritance in Christ, as a child of age comes to his estate, and enters into all his father bequeathed to him at his death. And as an heir does not possess any thing till his father's decease, and not till then is his father's testament or will of force, though signed, witnessed, and sealed: so neither could the glorious things of the kingdom be inherited by us till the death of Christ, through faith in whom we arrive to age, and may seize and enjoy, as our eternal inheritance, his salvation, love, pardon, righteousness, grace, glory, and divine happiness here and for ever.

Hence it is so often repeated and taught in the scriptures, "The just shall live by faith; We are justified by faith; By faith ye are saved;" and all this is done to overturn that principle the pride of our hearts has taught us, and which we have got so deeply

deeply rooted in our minds through hearing legal preaching, or doctrines of morality and self-righteousness, that we must be saved by our own good works.

Experience teaches us how hard it is to bring off people from the looking to the Old Covenant, and how nothing less than the Holy Ghost can so glorify Jesus and convince of his righteousness, as to bring a soul to rest there, and make it determine "to mention his righteousness and his only, and know nothing but him and him crucified."

The ministers of the gospel cannot be too careful to humble the pride of men, and bring down their haughtiness, and set at nought all our goodness and righteousness, which at best is but like filthy rags ; nor can they be too bold and positive in asserting, "that we are saved freely, and not of works but by grace, through faith, and not by the law;" for the time is come when the law must have its glory done away, and vanish and wax old, and Christ the Lord alone must be exalted, and the gospel preached to every creature.

It is a mistake that some religious people make, in insisting so much about preaching and keeping the law, because of which I will speak freely of this matter.

The law is the covenant of works, which I have shewn before, and was made for the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt, and had learned to reason heathenishly about God's dealing inequitably in remembering the sin of the fathers upon the children ; and therefore to stop their mouths, to convince them of sin, as well as for other divine reasons, he entered into a covenant with his people, of which his faithful Moses was the Mediator, and which was sealed with the blood of bulls and goats, and ordained to continue till the seed, Christ, should come.

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This law and covenant was then magnified and made honourable, and a regular priesthood appointed to read, teach, and publish this law throughout all the tribes. The tables of this law were laid up in an ark by order of the Lord, and to this all the Jews went up and visited, and heard it read some hundred years. It was delivered also upon mount Sinai, in Arabia, with thunder and lightnings, and with the sound of a trumpet and ministration of angels, and with so much awfulness and terror, that all that heard it fled at the voice of him that spake, and Moses himself confessed, "I do exceedingly fear and quake." All this served to make the authority of it of more weight and importance. But though the law was divine, and a transcript of the mind of God, and was preached with blessing, and the neglecters and despisers of it punished with plagues and heavy judgments, yet God had not designed it to be of long duration; but as it was added to the covenant of mercy and grace revealed to Abraham, because of transgression, so its author graciously designed, when the Lamb should take away the sin of the world and finish transgression, to remove it as if it had not entered, and so let the covenant of grace again shine and appear to all men in the gospel of Christ.

Jeremiah lived under the law, and was obedient to it like other men of God; but he foresaw, when the Deliverer should come, a wonderful alteration would ensue; therefore he says, "The days come, saith the Lord, that they shall say no more the ark of the covenant of the Lord, neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done," or magnified any more, Jer. iii. 16.

In his time to have spoken such words must have endangered his life; for, doubtless, all who heard him

him thought, as the latter Jews did when they heard Paul and Stephen say we could not be saved by our works, "this man speaketh blasphemous words against the law;" and this must have been one reason why he and all the prophets were so slighted and persecuted in their day, because they spoke of changing the covenant, the law, the priesthood, &c. and saving the world by a better sacrifice, and by a better covenant; for the zealous Jews at no time could hear of this, especially as they knew God had spoken all the words of the law, and commanded it to all their generations for ever. But even in this dark dispensation, when the people were shut up under the law to the faith which was afterwards revealed, there were many who saw they could not be saved by that covenant, and who could find how far short they fell of the righteousness of the law; and these, without doubt, rejoiced to hear of a covenant that could give life and justify from sin, and such sought and enquired diligently about the salvation, and having seen it afar off, believed, and died in faith, so escaping the curse of the law, and getting clear of those heavy bonds and yokes "which they nor their fathers were able to bear."

In like manner David mentions the invalidity and insufficiency of the sacrifices, that could not atone for the breaches of the first covenant, and prays the Lord to wash him, knowing that else he could not be purged by the blood of bulls.

Again he saw the everlasting covenant, and knew God had made it with him, wherefore he died in peace: for else, he acknowledged that no man by the law could be justified in God's sight.

Also Jeremiah comforts such as mourned and sighed under the law, by saying, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt," Jer. xxxi. 31. Some other prophets also had hinted at giving the Lord for a "covenant to the people;" and Ezekiel spoke more than once of the covenant of grace, and saving his people freely. See Ezek. xvi. to the end.

Thus it went till Jesus Christ died, and rent the vail in twain, unsealing the mystery, and bringing light and eternal life to light by the gospel: and now without the law sin is learned in his death, and the glad news of salvation by him alone is declared to every creature. Such as now contend for the preaching of the covenant of works or the doctrine of the law, are ignorant of the gospel, and, like Apollos, they need one to teach them the way of God more perfectly. The death of Christ and his sufferings preach deeper and with better effect than all laws and commandments, and he who is not reclaimed by the gospel will never be won by the law. If the knowledge of sin came by the law, much more can we know how evil sin is since it cost Jesus his life, and could not be purged away but by the dying of the Son of God; but far, yea far more is found in the New Covenant than in the Old, for that promised life, but this eternal life; that failed because of the weakness of them that were under it, and so could justify none; but the blood of Jesu's covenant brings grace and truth, pardon of sins, full acquittance of all past debts, power to live godly and righteously in the world, and seals us to be his for evermore.

At our entering into the blessings of this covenant we are instantly freed from the law and its threatenings; no condemnation can reach us, because "we are not under the law but under grace." Yea had

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we before our faith in Christ made a league with death and a covenant with hell, it should not stand, Satan must give up, Death must deliver back, and the fetters of sin, which are like brass and iron, must be dissolved, and become like tow that had touched the fire, and we should be free indeed.

But here it would not be amiss to observe, that though the children of God, and such as are in the new covenant, and not under the law, nor in danger of perishing, yet have they no license to sin; nor can a faithful soul be ever persuaded of that delusive doctrine, that there is no sin to a believer; they can sin, but no human tongue can describe what pain and inward remorse such must feel, who again grieve the Lamb willingly, and venture to defile their raiment. "If thy children sin I will visit their offences with a rod, and their sin with scourges, saith the Lord." But should a soul, conscious of his continual weakness, poverty, and faults, feel a thought amiss, or see he has done wrong, or spoken or behaved ill, he cannot rest till our Saviour has taken it away; nor may we be afraid to suspect their estate, who, with all their clear and orthodox opinions of grace, live in sin, or are drunkards, unclean, unchaste, irreligious, covetous, worldly-minded, proud, boasters, lovers of pleasure, passionate, and intemperate, for they are not born of God, and are still of the world. At the same time, the abuse wherewith some have abused the gospel of free grace must not stumble us, or make us legal in our doctrine, manners, or ideas, nor must we darken the covenant by making any condition of our being accepted but what God has made. We are accepted for Jesus Christ's sake, and saved as freely as a brand taken out of the fire by one who thought it a pity it should be burned; and should we ascribe the least part of our peace, pardon,

pardon, or righteousness, to any other thing than his blood and merits, we rob the Lord, and turn spiritual thieves.

But then some think we destroy and make void the law. No: it is not made void, it stands good and condemns wicked men, and all such hypocrites who urge the necessity of observing it, and yet break it, and who, out of a fond opinion of their own righteousness, slight the righteousness of our Lord Christ. The law was made for the disobedient, and over such it continues to stand as a swift witness, but it never was made to make men righteous; "for the law made nothing perfect, and if righteousness came by the law, Christ is dead in vain."

The strict sect of the Pharisees, in our Saviour's time, were of this mind; they supposed the end of the law was to make men righteous, and therefore with great art and study found ways so to expound the words of the commandments, that many could live, according to their exposition, blameless under the law; for they taught, If they had no images, bowed down to none of the idols of the nations, but worshipped only the God of Abraham, they were clear in the first commands; so if they did not name the Shemhamphorash, or the unutterable name of God, whereby he was made known to Moses, they were clear in taking his name in vain.

Also, if they did not go farther than such a distance on the Sabbath day, nor touched servile work, they were innocent in this respect.

If they acknowledged all gifts from their parents, and were thankful, they were free.

If they did not kill any one, nor were accessory to the death of any, they were safe.

If they had not gone in to another's wife and defiled the marriage bed, they were not in danger; and after this manner they taught, and made and increased their sect amazingly, so that the chief priests, and almost all the religious and serious men in the church, were of the Pharisees. These were strict observers of the letter of the law, were circumcised the eighth day, attended the festivals and fast-days duly, gave much alms, made long prayers in the streets, synagogues, and markets, compassed sea and land to make a proselyte, and this was their righteousness. In the Christian world there are still many of the sect, and who, though they have not arrived to the pitch of these strict Jews, nor attained to the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, prate about their goodness, and thank God they are not so bad as other men; they have done many works, are often busied in mending their patch-work righteousness, and daubing over the wall which is momentarily falling, with untempered mortar; their prayers, self-denial, and obedience, is all their righteousness; take that away, and, like Laban, they might complain, "You have taken away my gods, and what have I got more?"

When our Saviour came into the world, instead of praising the rigid company of Pharisees, or extolling the merit of their holy order, he speaks heavily against them, "Woe be to you, ye scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" And why was our Saviour so hard? Why did he continually thunder against them, and in all his parables so expose them, and assure his disciples, "that unless their righteousness exceeded the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, they could in no case enter the kingdom of heaven?" It was therefore, because they had perverted the meaning and intent of the law, they had taught in-
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stead the commandments and traditions of men, and so made, as it were, the law of God of no effect; for that law which should have convinced of sin, and laid all under the curse, and so obliged them to see and feel the want of a Saviour, that they had made to serve other ends, and persuaded the people life could be obtained thereby, and so contented and satisfied the worshippers under that covenant, with their obedience and observances of the law. This our Saviour calls whitening the wall, painting the tomb, washing the outside of the dish and platter, because all the righteousness, godliness, goodness, holiness, and whatever else under such names have been the work of men, is no other, since it is all form, it is all outward; it is put on, and does not change the evil nature, or alter the mind, or convert the heart. It may please men, and be esteemed and admired by the world, but must be an abomination in the sight of God, who tries the hearts and reins, and knows the same old, rotten, and filthy heart, the same bad and impure nature, still lives under all, and the whole of such a righteousness is in his eyes a cloak, a covering, but not the wedding garment; it is not the white robe, the righteousness of the saints; their robe is the salvation of God, and their garment the righteousness of Christ, and without which the best attainments, the most admired goodness and holiness is no better than the righteousness of scribes, pharisees, and hypocrites, and will be found of the same piece in the day when God enters into judgment with all flesh, and shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

That our Saviour might make his law shine in its ancient clearness, and serve whereto it was ordained, he invalidates all the false glosses and expoundings of the pharisees, and shews how he is guilty who seeks and receives honour of men; that whoso serves sin and calls God Father, taketh his name in vain,

and belongs to his father the devil; that he that looks on another with lust has committed adultery already in his heart; that he that hateth his brother is a murderer; and thus brings the most innocent under the curse, and levels to the ground all self-admiring, and our own righteousness, and, as St. Paul affirms, concludes all under sin, and in unbelief, and for their lives forbids men to build up what Christ has destroyed. If any do it they risque body and soul for ever; if their pride will not stoop to Jesus, but value their thoughts more than his, and will still dare to think, "I am not like this publican, I am better than he, I will not be saved freely, I believe I have some righteousness;" such will he behold afar off and send empty away; but where the soul is upright, honest, and sincere, they will not be so cheated; let men judge of them better if they will, but they themselves know what motions of sin are in their members, and that though the wall be whited, it is daubed and built with untempered mortar; though the tomb be garnished, it is inwardly a stinking and polluted place; and though the outside of the dish be clean, within are stirrings of pride, lust, revenge, envy, covetousness, and the love of the creature more than the love of the Creator. Souls sensible of this have no hope from the law, their mouths are stopped, and they plead no more for their righteousness, but are in quest and search after a better foundation, an everlasting righteousness, and this the Lord and his blood shall be to them.

There are others, who still think the law and covenant of works should yet be observed, because our Saviour has said, "One jot or tittle of the law should not fail till all was fulfilled;" but such must have a mean opinion of Jesus Christ and his obedience, who do not believe he has fulfilled and paid all, in his obedience under the law, answered all

its demands, and suffered all its curses and condemnation, and this is our righteousness. I wish only some who love to plead for the law, and to make it honourable, as they say, do not come into that case. St. Paul mentions in his epistles, who are teachers of the law, and do not know what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

The eternal mind of God was to save lost man freely, and this was promised to Adam, and established to Abraham, long before the law came by Moses, and as St. Paul reasons with the Galatians, "It is impossible for the law that came afterwards to make the covenant of promise of no effect." No man may disannul or make void a man's covenant, much less could any thing make null or void a covenant confirmed with the oath of God, and decreed as eternal as the heavens; and let men be offended or pleased, so it is, and shall be, that whoso hears Moses, reads, and likes to have doctrines of duties, works, and terms of acceptance preached to him, the veil is yet upon his heart untaken away, and he does not see the glories of the New Testament. What! O what would such do should God enter into judgment with them and try them by the law? They have not kept that covenant, what hope then have they? they would be without hope, they would be condemned. O let such betimes apply to the Mediator of the better Testament, and which is founded upon better promises, and experience what it is to be saved by his death from the law, sin, and everlasting misery, and they will be happy, and not till then.

Though I have in the beginning of this discourse spoken of the difference between the two covenants, yet I shall add a few words more before I conclude. The prophecy of Jeremiah, which is quoted in the eighth of the Hebrews, about the changing of the

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covenant,

covenant, says, "the new covenant shall not be according to the first."

Now the first was perfected upon mount Sinai, the second upon mount Calvary. The first was all of works, the second all of grace. The first was all, "Thou shalt do, Thou shalt not do;" but the second was all of what God would do for us, "I will be your God, and you shall be my people: I will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters: I will be merciful to your sins, and remember your iniquities no more." The first was written on tables of stone; the second on the heart and mind, that is, in the very nature, and is no other than making our heart and mind a copy of the law of God. The first was taught by the priests to the people, by a father to his children, by a man to his brother and to his neighbour; the second is taught by the Lord alone, "Neither shall they teach every man his brother, nor every man his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." The first covenant was for a time; the second for eternity. The promises in the first were temporal, the promises in the latter spiritual. The old covenant was good on God's part, but on our part uncertain and broken; the new covenant was good on all sides, and as the conditions of it are perfectly fulfilled in our Saviour, so is it sure, with all its blessings, to all the seed for evermore, and is a covenant that shall not be broken, an everlasting covenant. That was sealed with the blood of beasts, and in the hands of the man Moses, but this was sealed with God's own blood, and in the hands of the man Christ Jesus. With the first God finds fault, in that none could thereby be saved; but with the second he is well pleased, because thereby a
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company innumerable enter into the holiest of all, and are saved for ever.

All who were under the first testament, however strict and faithful, could obtain no grace farther than to be servants, and were in danger of being put away, like the bondmaid Hagar and her son ; but all in the New Testament are sons, and, like Isaac, to abide in the house of God alway.

Thus then it is not like the first covenant, to our great advantage and joy : for, instead of thunders, threatenings, and judgments, it is full of blessings, sweet and precious promises, glad tidings, and great comforts ; instead of cursing to hell, it brings to heaven ; and instead of a bill so much owest thou unto the Lord, it brings the full receipt, God has forgiven thee all trespasses ; instead of a revengeful Lord, we have a loving husband ; instead of commanding us what to do, it shews what great things our dear Saviour has done for us ; and from the most unhappy and miserable, it makes us the happiest creatures in the world, and ascertains to us the blessedness of the world to come.

Happy are they who, in reading the scriptures, discern the privilege of this new covenant, and who in a good conscience, and with a pure and unfeigned faith, possess them in their hearts. These read indeed the thunders of mount Sinai, and hear the threatenings of a fiery law, but they are hid in the wounds of the Lamb, and need fear no evil : They understand what the law saith to all sinners, and know how guilty and deserving of all the curses and condemnation they have been ; but the blood of Jesus has saved and washed them ; and as men run the file through the bills which are paid, so these behold the Lord God and the Lamb nailing all the ordinances which their sins had made to be against them, with his own body to the tree. The iron
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nail, like a file, goes through all, and tears and rends the old covenant to pieces, so that one can read nothing more than "the Lord thy God" in the whole. His blood blots out every curse, and silences every accuser, so that without fear they can enter into the judgment, and stand bold as a lion: The mighty Counsellor has directed them how to escape; the Advocate with the Father has pleaded and gained their cause; the Judge of all has acquitted them, and justified them from all things from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses."

May the Lord, who dwelleth in light inaccessible, enlighten all of you in this important matter, and help the poor sinner to enter into this new covenant through faith in his blood, and teach the soul who has tired himself under the law, to stoop and learn of him righteousness, and to find freely in him grace and everlasting redemption, that they may praise him for his love, wisdom, and great salvation for ever. Amen.

A N H Y M N.

1 **A** Sinner to the Lord I come,
 Worthy that thou should'st me consume,
 But O! one thing I plead:
 The ev'ry mite to thee I ow'd,
 Christ Jesus, with his own heart's blood,
 In pity for me paid.

2 I know if thou should'st bring me near,
 To answer at thy lawful bar,
 And my own self defend,
 If Jesus did his grace withdraw,
 I know, O Lord, thy fiery law
 My soul to hell would send.

3 But

- 3 But should'st thou me to judgment call,
Tho' Moses fac'd me there, and all
My many sins appear'd ;
I would not fear, but boldly stand,
If Jesus open'd his pierc'd hand,
I know I should be spared.
- 4 My full receipt should there be shew'd,
Written with iron pens in blood,
On Jesu's hands and side :
I am safe, I'd cry, O Law and Sin,
Ye cannot bring me guilty in,
For Christ was crucify'd.
- 5 My bonds and bills he on the tree
Has nail'd, and so acquitted me
From pain, and guilt, and shame ;
He saw I nothing had to pay,
So freely wash'd my sin away ;
All glory to his name !

DISCOURSE XIV.

THE BENEFITS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

HEB. xii. 22, 23, 24.

We are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new-covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

WHEN the author of this 'epistle had said much of the law, and the heavy dispensation of Moses, and shewed how it made nothing perfect, nor was remission of sins to be expected under that covenant, but all was calculated and imposed on the children of Israel for a time, till the Saviour should come and establish a better testament, and founded upon better promises, and had not only set forth the unprofitableness of it, in that it could not purge the conscience, nor justify such as served under it, but had also observed how the awful manner in which it was delivered to the church in the wilderness, was with thunders and lightnings, with blackness, darkness, and a tempest, also with the sound of a trumpet, sounding louder and louder, and with a voice out of the tempest, and with an earthquake, and a
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strict charge that no soul might approach to the mountain, from whence it was delivered, and whereon the Lord descended with twenty thousand angels, and even if a beast should touch the mount it must be stoned, or thrust through with a dart, and which so affected the meek servant of God, Moses, that he quaked exceedingly and was afraid ; he then adds, But ye are not come to such a mountain, ye are not called to hear the fiery law, nor summoned to appear before God in so terrible majesty, but he says, " Ye are come to the mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, &c." he shews through the whole, what a happy difference there is between the two dispensations, that the believers in Christ, and such as hear the gospel are now brought into the nearest fellowship with the saints and family of God, and made to be near of kin to the spirits of just men, and have the glorious privileges of being written in heaven, and made free citizens of the new Jerusalem, and reckoned with the first-born sons and daughters of God, together with the enjoyment of an acquaintance with the Mediator and his Father ; and all this he mentions as the present benefits of faith, and to which all come on their belief in Christ.

All the blessings rehearsed in this part of the scripture have by some been thought such as pertained to the life to come, and possessed only in heaven when our christian race is ended ; but whoso considers the apostle's manner of writing, compared with other parts of the gospel, will easily see he speaks of things to which now the children of God come, and which are the real privileges of every believer, and his part of the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

Few, who lived from the time of Moses to Christ, enjoyed this grace, or ventured to enter in behind the
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the veil; but now the veil is rent, a way is laid open into the inner courts, and a highway prepared into the holy place, and into the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus; so that now the winter and storms are gone, and the shadows fled away, and nothing is heard but the voice of the Beloved, inviting sinners into his house, and calling souls to come to the feast of fat things, which he has prepared before all people; and to enjoy all the mercies and favours purchased by his death, which is the commonwealth of Israel.

Believers are now no more kept at a distance from God; no longer bound to be all their life-time in bondage, through the fear of death; no longer obliged to walk in darkness, or kept in pain, through the thunders and curses of the law, and the pursuing of the avenger of blood; but may see their interest clear in the salvation, may approach and speak with the Lord as a man speaks with his friend; may experience the power of the blood of sprinkling, and each may know he is a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. It is of this the text treats, and must be read in the church, as a part of the will and testament of Jesus, in which is specified the rights of his people, and the liberties and freedoms unto which he has broke a way for them by his flesh, and by death put his will in force, so that now all that is mentioned in this place, are the common rights of every believer in the world, and of which I shall treat freely.

Ye are come to the mount Sion: now the mount Sion was the spot on which the temple stood, and was the shadow of that in the upper world, and where the true temple is. To this we who believe come, and are founded upon this rock, and enter the gates of this temple, when we get into the
wounds

wounds of our Saviour. He himself is the temple, even the Lord God, and the Lamb, and his nail-prints and pierced side, are the everlasting doors by which the true worshippers enter, and by this door, by this new and living way, whoever enters in shall be saved. We are henceforward reckoned inhabitants of the rock, children of Zion, and such as have a right to follow the Lamb there, or whithersoever he goeth; and though we are not yet arrived in person among the virgins, who are actually there, nor have leave to quit the world below, and lay down our staves, and put off our sandals, and dwell there intirely, and be seen here no more, yet are we there in spirit, and belong certainly thereto. We have, as it were, taken up our freedom, and are Christ's freemen; and as St. Paul says, "citizens with the saints and with the household of God," and no more strangers and foreigners there. "Ye are come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." This city John says, is the church, and shall come down with the Lamb in the last day, like a bride adorned and ready for the bridegroom. Among this number we are admitted, and are become living stones in this building; and though we are not yet removed, and put into our right place, to go no more out, yet are we built upon Jesus, the head corner-stone, and a part of the house of God. We belong to the Jerusalem above, as much as if we were there, nor can that church be perfect and complete, till we are with them in body and soul. This heavenly Jerusalem has many of her living stones not yet gathered out of the earth, many of her members are still in the world, and are grounded and fixed upon her rock, the rock of ages, and become one with him; so that we are numbered with the stones of this city, in the eyes of our Saviour; and we know it, and the living God, whose

tabernacle is with men, dwells in us, and makes us his habitation and holy temple.

We are come also to an innumerable company of angels. When Jacob went out, God's hosts, his Mahanaim, went out with him ; and when Elisha was on the mountain with his servant, and persecuted by the king's army, a multitude of angels were their guards, the whole hill was filled 'with chariots of fire, and horses of fire. To this day the heavenly hosts minister to the heirs of salvation, and encamp round about us, day and night ; an innumerable company attend the church militant, and no army of angels, no legion of seraphims do think it beneath them to wait round about our beds, or watch our way, since they have seen how dear we are in the eyes of their Maker. They saw the tears he shed, the streams of blood he spilt for us ; they saw his griefs, his agonies, and were the eye-witnesses of all his sufferings on our account. They heard his intercession, his strong cries and tears in our behalf, and must count it a favour and honour to nurse or minister to souls, bought so dearly, and loved with so great a love. ' If they were allowed to appear visibly to us, and to converse with us, their salutation would be daily like Gabriel's to the virgin, " hail ! ye highly favoured !" for they know how highly esteemed we are by the Son of God our Saviour. But though so many of these ministers are with us constantly, it is good that we do not speak with them and see them, since it would be easy for us to put them in the stead of our Saviour, and be less eager to enjoy himself. He speaks with us, and is always near us, and can manifest his love, and make it surer to us, than if an angel had told us of it. An angel could only speak to the ear, but he to the heart, and is better to us than all the angels in heaven ; but yet a time shall come when the danger

ger of idolatry shall be over, and then we shall see the innumerable company, who now are our attendants. They shall one day carry us to Abraham's bosom, and sing us into our Father's house. They shall soon see us upon the throne with our husband, and be our fellows for evermore, and the virgins that shall bear us company.

We are come to the general assembly, and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven. That is to say, to the one fold, to the one church of God, to the elect and bride of Jesus, to the catholick, or general assembly of the faithful; we are added to the goodly company of the prophets, to the noble army of martyrs, and in the family with the apostles of the Lamb, and all his disciples and friends, gathered out of all nations and lands, and which are properly his first-born; that is, his heirs, such as have his Father for their Father, and his God for their God, and whom he will not be ashamed to call brethren. In the last day, in the harvest, when the angel shall preach the everlasting gospel to all that dwell upon the earth, and when a nation shall be born at once, and whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved; then shall these who have believed in Christ now, and are his first-fruits in the earth, have the honour to be the first-born among many brethren. As in the days of the law there was the feast of the first-fruits, when all the first ripe grapes, olive-berries, ears of corn, flowers, &c. were gathered and presented to the Lord, so also was there a feast of harvests, when all was brought in safe out of the field. Now the Lord takes one out of a city, and two out of a family, and bringeth them to Zion; he gathers in the first ripe fruits out of every land, and makes him little households in the earth like a flock, and like an handful of corn, and these are his first-

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born,

born, his chosen, the heirs and joint-heirs with their elder brother Jesus; but there shall be also a "harvest-day, when the nations shall flow to him, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong," and have an innumerable host for his inheritance, and when his seed shall be like the stars of heaven for multitude, and which no man can number, but even through eternity, those who in this day of grace came to the Lord, and partook of the communion of the saints, shall be for ever blessed in being the first-born.

These are written in heaven, and in their happiness our Saviour would have his disciples rejoice more than in having the devils and evil spirits subject to them, and being able to work miracles and do wonderful works. He says, "Rejoice not in this, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." It was not their gifts that made them children of God, or proved to them the certainty of their salvation: but the spirit of God, who bore witness with their spirits, that they were written down in the Lamb's book of life. This is now our joy who believe in Jesus, we are persuaded our names are graven on our Saviour's hands. He remembers the anguish his body and soul endured, when the iron pens stamped our names there, and this endears us to him and him to us. Let our names be here cast out as evil; let them be noted down with hereticks, and fools, and madmen; let our friends, our dear and nearest relations, be ashamed to mention our names; let them be a by-word, and proverb of reproach, for our Saviour's and the gospel's sake; let our enemies mock them, and the drunkard and persecutors slander and reproach our names in their songs, and make sport with them; yet will we rejoice and be glad, for they are precious in our Saviour's sight, and honoured more than if written on the breast of Aaron, or borne on the breast-plate of the

the high priest; for the nails that tore the hands of the holy child Jesus, engraved with the engraving of a signet our names there: what the church once so heartily prayed for, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm," we have obtained; and now our high priest, the Son of God, carries us graven upon his heart, and written upon the palms of his hands. Our names are written in heaven, nor will our loving Lord and Master blot them out of his book of life, but confess them before his Father, and in the presence of the holy angels.

We are come to God the Judge of all. We come guilty criminals self-condemned, and judged worthy of eternal misery, but we are justified; the Judge of all the earth has acquitted us, and now there is no condemnation for us. Who can lay any thing to our charge! "It is God that justifies us, who can condemn us? It is Christ that died for us," and was judged and sentenced to death in our stead, that we might not be judged of the Lord. There was a time when an assize was held in our own breasts, when our sins and guilty conscience cried out against us, and we felt the sentence of death in ourselves; the Lord set before us in array and order, all what we had done amiss, and wherein we had dealt wickedly; and it was as if his sword was drawn to cut us off, and send us accursed from his presence. O how did our hearts tremble! and every lonely walk and field, every closet and secret chamber, were witnesses to our sighs and tears. We did not dare look up to heaven, but like the publican smote on our breasts, and prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Have pity upon the chief of sinners! What a sight and sense of sin had we! Our spirits sunk within us, and our hearts ached and failed with dread and fear. We stood like poor malefactors before their judge, and guilty as robbers, thieves and murderers,

and waited, not knowing if we should not be utterly rejected and banished from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when in this sad estate Jesus undertook for us, he led us to the fountain of his blood, and bid us look upon him and be saved. In his hands we saw our receipts, and in his body beheld all our sins and offences; in the red-sea of his blood he washed us, and his bleeding wounds healed us, and on his account, and for his sufferings' sake, we are forgiven and pardoned. In this the Judge of all the earth has done right, for Jesus had merited our pardon, paid our debts, cancelled our bonds, broke the engagements, dissolved the old covenant, blotted out the hand-writing that was against us, and nailed it to his cross, and for us suffered the heavy curse and wrath, and endured our chastisement, death and hell. Now can we approach the Judge of all boldly, and call him My Father, and for this grace thank him, who once stood with his hands tied, and in bonds, at the bar of Pontius Pilate. He has burst our bands asunder, and cast away our cords, "he has preached deliverance to the captives," and said, "Loose them, and let them go." O Jesus! Glory be to thee!

We are come to the spirits of just men made perfect, and are complete in our Saviour. We are without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, because his blood has washed away our guilt, and the comeliness which he has put upon us, has made us perfect before him. We stand before God happy and blessed in his righteousness, and his holiness makes us all glorious within, our cloathing is of that wrought gold. We taste and enjoy, in part, that divine and spiritual happiness those possess above, and are safe in their safety, and sealed to the same redemption, only we are like children toiling in the field, or yet upon our journey, and they have entered the

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the sabbath, and are arrived at the haven where they 'would be; they are sitting down at the supper of the Lamb, and eating bread, and drinking new wine in the kingdom; but we are one man's sons, we are children of the same father, saved and adopted into the same house and family, and shall surely be one day with them as they are with their Lord.

We are come to Jesus; we have found the Christ, we have got the Saviour, the Mediator of the new covenant; he who made peace by the offering up of himself, and who has been our friend, interceded and prayed for us, and who has made with us a new covenant, having abolished the old, and taken it out of the way, because it was against us; he is become our Saviour, our Brother, our Refuge, and has reconciled us to God, and destroyed the enmity which reigned in our hearts, and kept us at a distance from our dear Creator. We have applied in our wretched condition to this loving Mediator, and he has pitied us, stood by us, and obtained eternal life for us. We know the Lamb, we are happily acquainted with the Mediator, we have ventured into his presence, and trusted in his name, and have found him gracious and merciful, long-suffering and of great goodness.

We are come to the blood of sprinkling, which speaks better things than that of Abel. When Cain slew him, his blood justly cried from the ground to heaven for vengeance, but Jesu's blood speaks better things, though we have been his murderers. His blood speaks pardon for us in the throne above, and peace in the earth beneath. When men offered the blood of calves and lambs under the old law, the persons for whom the sacrifices were made were not the better, their consciences remained unpurged, but the blood of Jesus speaks, it reaches the inmost heart, and speaks peace, and love and
mercy

mercy. It quiets the conscience, and assures us of our being accepted in heaven. It is a witness that our sins are done away. Let the old accuser of the brethren accuse us as he did Job, and let the former sins cry against us; let the beam out of the timber, and the stone out of the walls of the houses where we have committed sin, be witness against us; yea, let the broken law and your own conscience cry against us, yet this blood of Jesus out-cries all, and silences the voice of the enemy and the avenger. This blood has already been our bath, and has washed us from all our idols, and from all our filthiness, and speaks for us with almighty prevalency before the Throne, and with unspeakable sweetness it speaks within, "Thy sins are forgiven." "My peace I give unto thee." Some have foolishly thought coming to the blood of Jesus was a little matter, and the first step in christianity, and have soared and aimed at somewhat greater; but whoever have come indeed to this blood and known Jesus Christ crucified, he cannot think of higher matters, but resolves to know this alone. This the apostle mentions last, as being the highest and greatest attainment of a christian. This blood cleanseth from all sin, that none can be holier than the soul washed therein. This blood of sprinkling is the antetype of that on the Israelites door-posts; that preserved them from the destroying angel for a night, but this preserves from all destroyers, and frightens back ten thousand devils. This is better than the blood which the high-priests of the law sprinkled toward heaven seven times, with which they besmeared the people, their own cloaths, and the vessels of the temple, for that made nothing clean, and was only a shadow of this blood which cleanseth the heart from an evil conscience, and seals to the day of redemption.

This

This is the river of the fountain of life, whoever drinks of it shall live for ever. This is the only brook by the way, which can make him that drinks of it lift up his head. It is the wine that makes glad the heart of God and man. It is the only antidote against the poison of sin, the only thing that can quench the raging passions of lust and pride, the only river that can extinguish the wrath and flames of hell. And we are come to this blood of sprinkling, we have found this well of salvation, and here will we dwell. May this wash us daily and momentarily! May this revive and comfort us, when we are heavy and afflicted! May this refresh us when we are weary, and besprinkle all our words, thoughts, and works, and make our whole behaviour acceptable in the sight of God! May this be seen upon our foreheads living and dying, and ward off the destroyer! May this keep and preserve us clean and white in body and soul, and in all times of danger, or when we do wrong, may this speak for us alone better things than the blood of Abel! May it purge away all gloominess, guilt, darkness, and confusion from our hearts, and momentarily speak peace to us! Let as many as have found this precious blood of the Lamb, this almighty blood of God our Saviour, continue in faith, and abide near the wounds and cross of Christ Jesus, and they shall prove all this happiness, and learn from a blessed experience to prize and esteem the blood of sprinkling here, and to praise it everlastingly in the church triumphant hereafter, singing and saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive honour and glory, and blessing, for he has loved us, and washed us from our sins, and made us kings and priests to God by his blood, to him be thanksgiving and salvation for ever!" Amen.

AN HYMN.

1. **T**HE name of Christ, how sweet it sounds!
 How sweet the mention of his wounds!
 For thee, my soul, how dear and good,
 Is the bare naming of his blood!

2. What makes it precious thus to me
 Is, since the Lamb hung on the tree,
 His pangs and torments made me well,
 Who else had gone to endless hell.

3. The law, my conscience, and the fiend,
 Were witnesses how I had sinn'd;
 I stood accus'd, in debt and poor,
 When Jesus paid off all my score,

4. Nor this alone, but at his death,
 His ALL he would to me bequeath;
 I now am made his pleasant son,
 And heir to his eternal throne.

5. His dying words are graven deep
 Upon my heart, awake or sleep,
 This is the blood I shed for thee,
 Drink of this cup, and pardon'd be.

6. Now ends the ancient covenant,
 The wrath, the debt, and fear, and want;
 A testament is now of force,
 Revoking ev'ry former curse.

7. By this I 'scape eternal doom,
 And fearless nigh to God I come;
 My Father, to him I may say,
 And know he hears whene'er I pray.

8. I join

8. I join the number who are his,
And share their joy, and love, and bliss
I'm his, and He, the man divine,
With all his merits now is mine.
9. My dear Testator will I bless,
And wearing his pure righteousness,
I boldly shall his judgment meet,
And worship at his bleeding feet.
10. No death or judgment hence I dread,
The precious blood my Saviour shed,
The blood of sprinkling speaks for me,
I'm safe ! O Jesus praise to thee !

DISCOURSE XV.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

MATT. xvi. 13. 15.

Jesus asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? Whom do ye say that I am?

THE chief reason why our Saviour is so slighted, and why his words are of so little weight with the greatest part of mankind, is, because they do not know who he is. And even among those who are called by his name, and read his scriptures daily, there are not many who heartily believe in him.

From hence it is that some, when they speak seriously, or talk of religious matters, chuse as little as possible to name Jesus Christ, or his merits and redemption, but rather mention God Almighty, our Maker, the Divine Being, &c. and the more is the pity. It is often looked upon as ridiculous to speak of our Saviour as the true and very God; and such as venture to do it, must expect to be scorned and jeered, and laughed at for it, and will surely be as speckled birds, and as fools in all company. And thus for want of true faith in him, ministers, people, and whole countries, by little and little, leave the primitive doctrine of Christ, and get into a sort of refined heathenism; and this, I fear, is too much our case in these realms, where
once

once the churches looked upon the Redeemer as their only Lord,* and watered this doctrine with the blood of some hundreds of martyrs; and upon which our English church solemnly professes to be built in all her Articles and Homilies.

In opposing superstition and the unreasonable and unscriptural principles of a degenerate church, some have unawares denied the faith, and rushed into infidelity, and a modest sort of atheism: To prevent my Christian brethren from this, I will endeavour, if possible, to be a means; and therefore have chosen this text, which are the words of our Saviour to his disciples, and which I will speak of in order.

Our Saviour knew what was in man, and needed not that any one should teach him; but, to prove his disciples, he once asked them, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" They answered, "Some say thou art Elias; others say thou art Jeremias; and some think thou art John the Baptist, or one of the old prophets risen from the dead." How confused were many at that time, and how few thought right! But it seems much the same even now, for see how all men differ in their judgments about him. The Turks say, he was a just person, a prophet of God, but no more. The Jews are divided; the most part look upon him as a deceiver, and the very destroyer of their religion and country, and do not like to hear of him; while a few, less rash, think better of him: but none will bear to hear that he is the Lord Jehovah: in them is that scripture fulfilled, "He came to his own, and his own received him not," John i. 11. Among the nominal, or so called, Christians, men who confess the truth of the New Testament,

* See the hymn after the Communion.

how many opinions are there? Some look upon the Son of man as a prophet and apostle of God, the last and greatest of all the seers, or one of the highest of the principalities, whom God has honoured and appointed to be the founder of our religion and pattern of Christianity; which religious order he stored with divine and wholesome laws, perfected its precepts, lived in it a holy life," as a pattern and example; and, at last, after he had been a preacher of the best doctrines and solid morality, died a martyr for his religion. There are others who think him still more, and conclude, that "no man could do the miracles that he did, except God was with him;" and these can easily consent that he is the Son of God, and no mere man, but nevertheless will have a God, whom they call the Father, greater than he, and above him, and are far from meaning Jesus, when they read or speak of God Almighty; neither do they worship or pray to him as the Lord of heaven and earth, Jehovah.

From whence proceed these different principles of Christ? Why from hence, being ignorant of the scriptures and the power of God. If they had known the scriptures, they would answer cheerfully when asked, "What do ye think of Christ? He is the Lord, the Lord from heaven, the I AM; him, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the God of our fathers, the Lord God Almighty;" for thus the scriptures preach him every where. And had their hearts ever been enlightened by the Father; had they ever been taught of the Holy Ghost, or felt the power of God upon their own souls, they would confess with Thomas, "Thou art my Lord and my God!" or, with St. Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" And, in another place, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" Luke v. 8.

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Thus it is then that men are prone to err and judge according to their own weak reason, that neither the best confessions of faith, creeds, articles, homilies; liturgies, nor even the scripture itself, without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, can make them think rightly, or believe worthily, of the Son of man, our Lord.

What will be most proper to be considered in this discourse will be,

First, the divinity of Jesus Christ, and his eternal being and supremacy before all worlds, of all which he is the Maker, Lord, and Upholder.

Secondly, The doctrine of his humanity, or that mystery of grace, his holy incarnation; and for what end he was made man, and suffered death.

Thirdly, The hearty confession of a truly christian man.

I shall confine myself to speak only as the oracles of God, and to say none other, in defence and proof of these things, than what Moses, the prophets, the psalms, and witnesses of Jesus have before spoken. The church, which is the pillar and ground of truth, has always received the testimony of the scriptures; and we know, "if any man hear not these, then neither would he be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Where some have dared to question their veracity and truth, and ventured imprudently to jest or trifle with the words of God against their own conscience; such I leave to the Judge of all the earth, who in that day shall judge the dead out of the things written in the book; and on purpose I will speak only to those who receive the scriptures as the true sayings of God.

I believe no one can read the Bible, and count Christ's divinity a new doctrine; for then he must
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have eyes and not see, and ears and not hear, since all the prophets have witnessed of him, and put it out of doubt, that he is the same that appeared to the fathers, the holy One of Israel, the true God and eternal life; and this will be plain from what follows.

It is said in the xviiiith chapter of Genesis, the Lord appeared to Abraham, that Abraham saw him, that he pleaded with him, that the Lord went his way from communing with him, &c. In the xxvith chapter it is said again, the Lord appeared to Isaac : and in the xxxiid chapter, he met Jacob, wrestled with him, gave him a new name, &c. And Jacob said, " I have seen God face to face ;" and from hence he was called, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, i. e. the God who appeared to them, whom they served, and who blessed them.

In like manner he appeared to Moses, not only when he was hid in the rock, and the glory of God passed before him, and he saw the back parts of Jehovah, but it is also said, " he saw a similitude of God more than other prophets, and spake with him face to face, as a man speaketh with his friend," *Exod.* xxxiii. 11. *Numb.* xii. 8. So Manoah and his wife saw God, *Judges*, xiii. 22. So Joshua saw the Lord and worshipped him as the Lord of hosts, *Joshua* v. 14. Micaiah says, " I saw the Lord," *1 Kings* xxii. 19. Isaiah says the same, " I also saw the Lord," *Isaiah* vi. 1. And Daniel says, " I beheld the Ancient of Days," *Dan.* vii. 9. After all which our Saviour affirms, " No man hath seen the Father," *John* vi. 46. " Him whom ye say is your God, no man hath seen at any time," *John* i. 18. *1 John* iv. 12. But then who was it that appeared? Whom did Moses and the prophets see? It was Jesus Christ : All saw him and
spake

spake of him : " All the scriptures testify of him," John v. 39. " He is the Lord," Acts ix. 17. " He is the Almighty," Rev. i. 8. " He is the true God," 1 John v. 20. " He is the only Lord God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ," Jude ver. 4.

This Job knew well when he said, " God shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, whom I shall see in my flesh," Job xix. 25, 26. And David, throughout the Psalms, calls him, " My Lord, my Saviour, my Light, my Redeemer : The Lord is my Shepherd," Psalm xxiii. " The Lord is my Rock," Psalm xviii. 2. We know our Saviour applies this to himself, and says, " I am the good Shepherd," John x. 11. St. Paul also says, " This rock is Christ," 1 Cor. x. 4. Even the unutterable name, which God named to Moses out of the bush, (and which is looked upon as the most dreadful and sacred of all the names of God) our Saviour appropriates to himself, and for which cause the Jews were about to stone him. See John viii. 24 and 58. Should we search diligently the prophets and the Psalms concerning Jesus, we should soon see that the Saviour born to us is Christ the Lord : " The Son given to us is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Most Holy, the Redeemer, the God of the whole earth," Luke ii. 11. Isa. ix. 6. Dan. ix. 24. Isa. liv. 5. Yea, Isaiah, who, on account of his great insight into the person and kingdom of Christ, has been called the evangelical prophet, boldly asserts, " He is God, and there is none else, the Lord, a just God, and a Saviour ; and there is none besides him," Isa. xiv. 5. 21, 22. It is to the Son, David here saith, " Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom, &c. Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands ; they shall
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perish,

perish, but thou remainest ; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but thou art *the same*, and thy years shall not fail," Heb. 1. 8—12. Isaiah, when he saw his glory afar off, knew he would one day tabernacle with men ; and had foretold his name shall be Immanuel, Isa. vii. 14. ; or, as St. Paul hath it, God manifest in the flesh, 1 Tim. iii. 16. So Micah, speaking of God's birth in the world, says concerning his eternal existence, " his goings-forth have been of old, even from everlasting," Micah v. 2.

But why need I to use so many arguments, or bring more proofs to make it clear, that this doctrine of the Son of man's Godhead is according to the scriptures, since " his name is above every name that is named in heaven?" Phil. ii. 9. and since all the angels of God, or all the Elohim, or gods, worship before him : and the whole first chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews was written to prove the same thing, namely, that Jesus is no created being, no angel, in the common sense, no inferior deity, but the maker and supporter of all worlds and creatures, the very essence and express image and person of God, whom all creatures and angels serve, and before whom all the Gods fall down and worship.

That he is more than all prophets and sons of God, is evident also from Heb. iii. 3. " This Man is counted worthy of more honour than Moses, inasmuch as he who has builded the house, has more honour than the house, because he built the house, which house we are ; and is before all things, and author of all, whether angels, principalities, thrones, or men, visible or invisible ; and is heir and inheritor of all, supporting them by the word of his power ; God over all blessed for ever," Heb. i. 2, 3. John i. 3. 10. Rom. ix. 5. xi. 36. But,

But, to say no more, if he be not God, verily and truly how can we blame the Jews for going about to stone him? or how can we say, "with wicked hands they have crucified and slain him?" Since their reasons for it were, "Because of blasphemy, in that he, being a man, made himself God," John x. 33. and because he said, "Before Abraham was, I AM," John viii. 58. And this was their accusation before Pilate, "He ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God," John xix. 7. My dear brethren, there is no medium: either he is God, or a blasphemer. If he be God, then give him his honour, and serve him as God; and if not, then do not be any longer called by his name; openly join the Turks and Jews, and cry out, "Away with him from the earth! We will not have this Man to reign over us!"

So sure were the cloud of his witnesses, and the noble army of martyrs, of the eternal divinity of their Master, that they would know no other, preached no other, but agreed to publish through the earth the doctrine they had received of their Head. "All men must honour the Son, even as the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father," John v. 23. "He that is not in the doctrine of the Son, he is without God, he is an Atheist," 2 John 9. Among the faithful assertors of this true doctrine, St. Paul is particular; he tells the Ephesians, "at that time that ye were without Christ, ye were without God in the world," Eph. ii. 12. And again, "In him dwelleth the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9. But all this we have immediately from the Lord and Bishop of our souls himself: for when Philip wanted once to see the Father, of whom he had heard Jesus say so much, and thought then he should be fully satisfied, our Saviour said to him,
"Philip,

“ Philip, have I been so long with you, and you have not known me? He that seeth me, seeth the Father: I am in the Father, and the Father in me,” John xiv. 9. 10.

The whole book of the Revelations teacheth us, that Jesus is he, “ which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty: He who is God and the Almighty in the midst of the throne: He before whom all sing and worship upon their faces, casting down their crowns to the ground at his feet, because he has been slain: He who is the King of kings and Lord of lords: He who shall judge the world, and is the First and the Last;” and who is, as St. Peter and Paul declare him, “ the Lord of all,” Acts x. 36.

I pass by, on purpose, many places of this kind, because if I should bring all the proofs which could be brought, to shew who the Son of man is, I must then bring all the Bible, for all testify of him; all confess him the Lord, beside martyrs and confessors without number, who all sung their hymns, according to Pliny, to one Jesus, whom they (i. e. Christians) honoured and worshipped as God; and this the venerable council of Nice confirmed, and all the churches of Christ in the east and west, and in every age, both received and preached this doctrine: for upon this Rock is the whole universal or catholic church built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. These scriptures, however, may be enough to prove, that Jesus is indeed the everlasting Lord God, who made heaven and earth, the One God spoken of by all the prophets, the supreme Maker and Ruler of all worlds, and who, with all his greatness and Majesty, is Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Now I come, secondly, to speak of the humanity of the Most High, and for what end God humbled himself to put on our nature; and this is well expressed

pressed in the words of the Nicene creed: "For us men, and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, and was made man:" or, in St. John's gospel, after he had asserted the Word or Logos was God, and without him was not any thing made that is made, he says, "and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," John i. 14. And the same apostle even determines hereby who are of God; namely, those who confess him in the flesh, and forbids to believe or receive any other doctrine, because he says it is of antichrist, and of the false prophet, to deny him in the flesh, 1 John iv. 2. Since then this is so material a matter, let us give the more earnest heed to it, for no mystery of grace or power is greater or more sacred than this, "God manifest in the flesh." As surely as Jesus is very and essentially God, equal to the Father, and the Holy Ghost, in the blessed Trinity, so also is he very and true man, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, and became like us in all things, sin only excepted. This was needful, for else he could not have suffered or died; and, in this respect, he who was God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself, and was in form of a servant, and differed nothing from a servant, though he was Lord of all: and in this state it was true the Father was greater than he, and every angel higher than he, "since for the suffering of death he was made a little lower than the angels." Heb. ii. 9.

Here then come and worship, and adore, and be astonished, all who hear me! to see him who made you, and is the very image and brightness of the Father, made a man, and appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh. See him before whom the seraphims covered their faces in their wings, now the Son of man and the offspring of David. He humbles himself and appears in our nature and image, when we
had

had lost and forfeited his. He lays by all the glory of a son, and is a servant under the law, that we, who were servants; might receive the glory and honour to become sons of God. Here, then, see how he loved us. He did not stoop to be an angel or wear the form of a seraphim, though that had been amazing humility, but stooped yet far lower, and became man! Why this was necessary, and why God would vouchsafe so to abase himself, was, That as by man came sin, so by man might sin be taken away: "that as by one man's disobedience all became sinners, so by the obedience of one Man all might become righteous." Redemption was his divine aim through the whole; and therefore, when he saw sin enter into the world, and beheld the dreadful effects of it upon every creature, and knew how the curse, and death, and hell, would ruin justly all mankind, he pitied us, or, as it is expressed in Ezekiel, "saw us in our blood, and had compassion on us." He knew he had not made us to destroy us; nor could delight in the death of a sinner, or even bear to see us lost without help. No, far be such thoughts from our hearts; he loved us with everlasting love, and resolved to be our Saviour. His heart yearned over us, and was touched with our miseries and sad estate; and though he knew beforehand what it would cost him to save us with equity, and to bring us out of the hands of the enemy with righteousness, yet he determined, cost what it would, to save us. He foresaw what he must endure in our stead, what horror and distress he must sustain in making an atonement for us; considered how our punishment would make him sweat blood, and endure the pangs of hell and death, yet he was bent upon our delivery, and saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied.

This was then the great end of our Lord Jehovah's incarnation, that he might be capable of dying

dying for his church and suffering in our stead, and so clear and absolve and justify us before his throne, and reconcile us to his Father and our Father, and make up our breach. Here at once he makes all his angels see how he loved us; and to make a perfect and infinite amends and satisfaction, he decrees to offer himself, and bear all our sins in his own body upon the tree. He knew no creature could undertake this work; nor indeed would he trust any one with the souls who were so precious in his sight, or hazard their perishing eternally through the default of him to whom he should trust the redemption. He only was worthy in heaven and earth, and under the earth, to be the Saviour; and therefore when the appointed time came, the day of God's vengeance, he came down ready into the world to meet the storm, and drink up the curse in his own flesh and blood. Therefore he uses that similitude in the gospel, "I would have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." We know how the careful hen behaves when the sky lowers and threatens a storm; she spreads out her wings over her chickens, and sits contented in the shower and tempest to shelter and screen them; and often it has been seen that a hen has really died and perished over her young, when the storm of heavy hail or rain has been great. But now forget where you are, and let me lead you to mount Calvary, and I will show you the antetype of all this, and greater love: there Jesus, the God of all flesh and Shepherd of the sheep, when he saw the wrath like a black cloud lower; or, as he says in the Psalms, "when the waterspouts of God threatened," he made ready, put on our nature, and stretched out his arms upon the cross (as the hen stretches out her wings),
and

and calls to all his guilty children, "Come unto me: turn ye to the strong-hold, till the wrath be overpast;" and there does he die in the distressing stormy wind and tempest: the billows went over his head; the sword of the Lord awakened upon him, and the deep waters entered his soul; but there he hung amidst all, that he might be a hiding-place to his people, a refuge and a sanctuary to his guilty flock; and did not grudge to die, treading as it were the wine-press of the wrath of God, so he might thereby but spare the souls, and gather them to him as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings: and this is true, whoever flies to him, or escapes to that shelter, shall be safe; they shall find a rest for their souls. This was his aim in becoming a man, his design in tabernacling among us, that to him shall all flesh come; and that whosoever would come to him, should find everlasting life. This many thousand souls find true daily; and experience in their hearts assuredly that they are safe in him, and no man shall pluck them out of his hands. O blessed Refuge! O happy refugees! Would to God that all who hear me this day had found him their strong hold, their place to flee to in time of trouble, and knew his everlasting arms were over them to shelter and bless them, and underneath to keep them lest they should fall! Would to God all that are here did hereby perceive the love of God, that he laid down his life for us! Would to God that all overseers, ministers, and shepherds, in the service of the chief Priest, would but hence learn how God loved the world, and would not spare any pains, or cares, or labour, night or day, to help and feed the church which God purchased with his own blood, but let all men see, by their diligence and concern

cern for the salvation of men, that they believe in their hearts what they read and confess with their lips concerning the love of Christ and this his merciful and glorious redemption. Whoever have known him, have known him God Almighty ; and of this their inmost heart is persuaded by the Holy Ghost ; and whoever have got his redemption, are out of doubt that their sins have been washed away, and their raiment made white in the blood of the Lamb. It is such who worship him as their true Lord and Saviour ; and such only can properly answer to this question, " Whom do you say that I am ?" These, without hesitation, without much time to reflect, and without all doubt, know and can answer, " Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God ! Thou art the Lord ! Thou art my Lord and my God !"

This brings me to the third thing proposed. Since this is the confession of a true christian man, to answer to that question of the Lord Christ, " Whom do you say that I am ? Whom dost thou say that I the Son of man am ?" Here the believer is not at a loss ; he believes Jesus Christ is his God and Maker, and has saved him by dying for him in his flesh, else he believes nothing at all, and is not worthy to be called by his name ; and even his calling him Lord, Lord, is taking his name in vain. But as I said, a believer, a true christian, a child of God, a disciple or follower of Christ, is one who has not satisfied or contented himself with the name of a christian, or with hearing the gospel of salvation, or with performing pious deeds or good works, &c. alone, but has obtained of the Holy Ghost living faith in the godhead and blood of our Saviour, and knows and feels that all his sins and

offences are pardoned and done away, and he is justified justly by Christ's death, who gave himself in his stead, and suffered and underwent his curse to save and redeem him. This he firmly depends upon and is comforted, and lives a happy and good life, to the honour of the holy name which is named upon him. Nor is such an one afraid or ashamed to acknowledge Jesus before men; nor will that God, in whom he believes, be ashamed of him before the angels, when he shall come, at the latter day, in the glory of his Father: but here, in an adulterous generation, where men do not love him nor live to please him: here, where Satan's seat is, and where many despise the foolishness of the preaching of the cross, he continues a witness of the Lamb, and when asked, "Whom do you say that Jesus is?" can make this happy answer, I believe he is the God of the whole earth, my Saviour and my Redeemer.

I believe that Jesus Christ, who was born in Bethlehem of the virgin Mary, who suffered under Pontius Pilate without the gates of Jerusalem, is verily, truly, and eternally God, the same person all the scriptures mention and treat of, and whom all true believers in all ages have known and worshipped as the holy One of Israel, the God of all mankind.

I believe God, the whole Godhead by him, made heaven and earth and all the worlds, things visible and invisible; that he made me body and soul, and saw me from his throne in my sinful state, and loved and pitied me, and in due time was a man for my sake; and by his obedience and meritorious life and death has now fully atoned for all my misdeeds and sins, and made me thereby just in the sight of God and the whole

whole blessed Trinity. I believe this Jesus Christ is my God, my Lord, my righteousness, my holiness, my redemption, the only wisdom which can do me good, my Saviour in time and in eternity; and I will hereon venture my body and soul for ever and ever.

I believe also and confess, that though I have been unworthy of his mercy, and no more deserved his favour, that yet, out of his free grace, his Holy Spirit has awakened and called me out of all my sins, and made to be concerned about my eternal state, and athirst for mercy and righteousness; that then it pleased the Son of God, my Saviour, to reveal his love in my heart, and to manifest himself to me, so that now I know I am his and he is mine. He loves me and I him; and whether I live or die I am his, who hath both lived and died, and rose and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living.

I believe, when I depart out of this world, I shall go to him in peace; and, when my pilgrimage and warfare is ended, I shall find a rest with him upon his throne; and, without tasting death, his angels shall carry me to his bosom, and I shall enter by the gates into the paradise of God, and follow him upon mount Zion with the church of the first-born, and with the spirits of just men made perfect; with whom I shall sit down in white raiment in the temple of God, and go no more out.

I believe that a day shall come when all people shall see the same Jesus that was crucified, coming in the clouds; and then every tongue shall confess his divinity, and every knee bow before him, who then shall appear in his Father's glory with all his saints and angels; and shall himself judge the world in righteousness, and save whom he will. In that day it shall be out of doubt who the Son of man is;

for heaven and earth and hell shall know he is the only Potentate, the God of gods and Lord of lords ; and all those, that would not have him to reign over them, shall flee before him. Then I believe he will confess me, and not be ashamed of me ; and on this I depend with all my heart. To him, with his Father and my Father, and to the Holy Ghost, one God blessed for ever, be salvation and praise, henceforth world without end. Amen.

DISCOURSE XVI.

THE SOWER.

MARK iv. 9.

He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

THESE words were spoken by our Saviour with particular emphasis, after he had ended the Parable of the Sower, and because of his speaking thus the disciples prayed with him when he was alone to unfold and explain what the parable meant, as well as that manner of speaking, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear," for hitherto they were unacquainted with both. Our Saviour then told them, that he must use similitudes, according to the prophecy, and speak in parables to such as were without, or unconverted, and not brought into the fold; but blesses their eyes, because, he saith, they see, and their ears for they hear; and meekly vouchsafed to open the whole before them, and to teach them, that although a man may have outward eyes, yet as long as he is not enlightened from above, he is blind and does not see; and though he have ears and is not taught of the Father in his heart, he does not hear; therefore he said, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." He whose ears my Father hath opened to the Gospel of salvation, who is awakened, and wants to understand the mysteries of the king-

dom, let him hear; to him is this message, to him are sent the words of this salvation.

Perhaps it would not be amiss for me to speak a little more of this matter, and give some reasons why our Lord Christ in the days of his flesh chose to speak in similitudes, and to deliver his doctrine in parables; and why, after his resurrection, the apostles did quite otherwise, and spoke so plainly the gospel, without using the Jewish figures or shadows, or the dark speeches or parables.

The reasons may be reduced to these two; First, because (till the death of Christ, who was the true Lamb, and that offering which was so long looked for to take away the iniquity of the land in one day) the Mosaical or Jewish dispensation did not cease; and as the whole of that dispensation was a sort of parable, a shadow of good things to come, and not the very substance, and as the prophets had used similitudes, and God had spoke to them very commonly in that way, which every one may see who reads the scripture; so Jesus, the head of all their goodly company, continued to speak in the same way, till the veil should be rent in twain in his flesh, and a way be opened thereby into the holy of holies by his blood. Hence it is that our Saviour seemed to speak plainly of his kingdom and salvation so seldom, and then only to his children and disciples, as it is written, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but to others it is not given," Matt. xiii. 11. This went so far, that it should have seemed as if he only preached to the elect of Israel, and spoke therefore in such a manner as if none should understand him but those whom his Father drew to him and enlightened. This appears more likely when we find our Saviour so charge his disciples, not to go to the Gentiles, nor enter the villages
even

even of the Samaritans, though they were of the family of Abraham. This made so many expressions of our Saviour seem as if he only had regard to such as the Father had given him before all worlds, and endeavour, as it were, to hide the gospel from the rest; and on to a too hasty conclusion of this sort many have been rash, and maintained very hot and lamentable disputes about election, of which, no doubt, they will one day be ashamed, having not understood the mystery of God; how he secretly proposed not only to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, but to give our Saviour for a light to the Gentiles, and his salvation to the ends of the earth, Isa. xlii. 6. However, so much must be allowed, that our Saviour's discourse at Nazareth, his charge to his disciples, his saying, "No man cometh to me except my Father draw him," as well as his last prayer in the xviith of St. John's gospel, prove his peculiar care of those who came to him out of Israel; but then he adds, "When I am lifted up, then I will draw all men after me: I can quicken whom I will; and accordingly we see how he commands the same disciples, whom he had before forbid to go to the Samaritans or Gentiles, now to preach the gospel to every creature, and promises, I will stand by you, I will be with you to the end of the world." But, as I said before, till by his death he had made the world his own again, he spake in parables after the Jewish manner, and left it over to his Father to give ears to hear, and a heart to understand, and pronounces those blessed who did hear and understand him.

The other reason for his doing this, was, that whoever would understand him might come and ask him privately; and hereby we may learn, that whatever appears dark to us in the scripture, or hidden,

or like a parable, in the doctrine of our Saviour, will always remain so, unless he by his Holy Spirit clear it to us; he must anoint our eyes with his eye-salve, if we would see; he must touch our ears, and say *Epphatha*, i. e. be opened, if we would hear and live. May his parable have that effect upon us, that we may daily enquire of him the true meaning, and so be taught of God and be wise in his sight, that he may say to us, "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear," what kings and righteous men and prophets have desired to see and have not seen; even the days of the Son of man and his salvation clearly, that you see; and what they wished to hear of the plain and pure gospel of his free grace and redemption, but did not hear, that ye hear. Nor may any helpful to us, or what concerns our eternal happiness, be sealed up or hid from us; rather may we have ears to hear, and a heart to understand, that we may be converted and be saved, and escape every evil in time and eternity!

I come now to speak of the parable itself, with the meaning of it, as our Saviour has been pleased to explain it to his disciples.

He saith, "A sower went out to sow his seed, and some fell by the way-side," that is, upon the road, upon the path whereon people go, and which is hard and unbroken, and this was partly trodden down and destroyed by such as went that way, and the rest the fowls of the air, that in such cases sit watching upon the neighbouring trees and hedges, devoured as soon as the sower was gone. A second parcel of seed fell upon stony ground, or as St. Luke describes it, upon a rock, where it had not much deepness of earth, nor moisture; and this, though it sprung up, when the sun arose and shone hot upon it, because it had no depth for its root,
nor

nor moisture, withered away. A third part fell among thorns, that is, in the hedges and among the weeds and briars; and this either rotted and came to nothing, or else what sprung up was soon choaked with the thorns that came up with it, that it bore no fruit. The fourth part fell upon the good ground, namely, upon the land tilled and ploughed for that purpose; here no travellers' feet trod it down, it was soon harrowed in by the husbandman, so that the fowls could not devour it; the hardness and stony nature was removed, the ground manured and made good, so that it could take deep root downward and bear fruit upward, and not easily be blown up with high winds, nor scorched up with the sun; there were no thorns nor weeds to choak it, "but it brought forth some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold."

I reverence always and adore our Saviour, whenever I read or hear his parables; for though he was the God of wisdom, and knew all the sciences and arts from everlasting, yet in his preaching a peasant can understand and comprehend as well as the most learned philosopher. When he would liken the kingdom of God, or compare it to earthly things, his likenesses are plain and easy, suited to the meanest capacity; and though the learned and understanding part of mankind have formerly done it, and may yet dare to dispise his manner of preaching, his parables, and mean comparisons, yet shall it appear the wisdom of God, in that day, when he shall shew "how he has chosen the weak things, and base, and things that are despised, to bring to naught the pride of man and the haughtiness of the world, and reveal to babes and foolish what is hid even from the wise and prudent."

How many of you that hear me have read this scripture, as well as others of the like nature, and
thought

thought no farther about it? How have you had ears, but would not hear what the Lord would hereby say to you? Now I pray you to give attention, and O may God so open the ears of all your hearts that you may henceforth hear and live!

The sower is properly the Son of Man; he is the chief Minister, the first and principal Labourer and Husbandman in all God's vineyard; but in some respects every minister of Jesus Christ is a sower, and so strews the good seed out of the treasure of his heart, in all places wheresoever he comes.

"The seed is the word of God," which Jesus himself first gave and preached in the world, and with which now his ministers are commissioned, who are sowers of the seed of eternal life.

"The ground is the heart," whereon the seed is sown.

"Those who receive the seed by the way-side," are the careless and light-minded, who hear the gospel, and are as unconcerned as if they heard some idle tale: Their ears are open to every merry story, to all curious accounts, to every foolish song, but deaf to the words of the Saviour, "as the deaf adder, which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely." These are they whose hearts were never broken, or concerned about eternal life, and least the preaching of the gospel, the love of Christ, or the promises in his word should have any effect upon them, the devils watch, like the fowls of the air, least if in reading the scripture, or under some discourse, they should appear at all affected, to steal away the very remembrance of it, and get perhaps some pleasant company to divert or laugh away their devout thoughts; some play, or dress, or romance must amuse them; some diversion or pleasure must raise their

their spirits, or drinking or feasting overcharge their hearts, and drown all the least stirrings of grace, and so the preacher sows and preaches in vain, and they receive it by the way-side in vain. O think to yourselves, Am not I the man? Have not I so heard and received the seed all my life time? And has not the devil always found means to make all the gospel to me nothing, and blinded and hardened my heart to all the loving intreaties of the Lamb of God, and hid, as it were, his blood and gospel from me? O pray our Saviour to drive away the fowls, and command the nest of every unclean and hateful bird to keep off, that you may once hear in faith the words of God, and be saved. .

But no doubt there are many here who will not reckon themselves among this sort: You, perhaps, have had a respect for the Bible, have been educated religiously, and gone strictly to church or meeting, done a great deal of good, &c. and after all may have been of that sort who receive the seed upon a rock, and upon stony ground. Those that fall under this blame are such as hear the word with joy; they may be so affected that they may think "never man spake like this Man;" they may go and call others, be very industrious to bring many to hear the gospel, and would not miss the hearing the word of God upon any account. They are such as frequent all religious places and company, read all pious books, receive the sacrament, and be diligent in many good works, but have still a heart of adamant, a heart like the nether mill-stone: They have never known what it was to melt before the blood and dying of Jesus, nor to be like wax before the fire of his burnt-offering. Our Saviour saith, the word in such springs up directly, but when the sun is up, in a time of heat, they wither away, because they have no depth, nor moisture; by this he means, they have no root in

in themselves, they have no inward experience of the love of God, nor have any more than a superficial joy, a flame like the foolish virgins' lamps, that soon goes out for lack of oil, and when affliction, or temptation, or persecution arises, because of the word, by and by they are offended: They like the doctrine of Christ, and seem to begin well, but by and by one of their old companions' mocks them, or their masters, benefactors, and parents threaten them, people of fashion are ashamed of them, and ten thousand things war with them on account of their being disposed for eternal life, and so they by little and little are offended; and since their hearts have never been softened and made tender by the blood and sufferings of Christ, at last all their good desires languish and wither, and in a short time they are again in the world as deceived as ever. O! hear this, my dear brethren, and call an assize in your own breast, judge yourselves in this weighty matter, and ask your own heart, Am I not one of these? People who are hereby meant are in many dangers; first, from a hard heart; secondly, from being ashamed of our Saviour; and, thirdly, from a fear of man.

By a hard heart I mean what is described in Eze-
kiel, as a heart of stone. A man may be found in
all the doctrines of the scripture in his head; he may
have been very strict in what men call duty; he may
have a glorious name in the world, and be looked
upon as half a saint, be a great disputant for reli-
gion, and after all have a heart like a flint-stone,
and like a rock, so that all the preaching of the cross,
all the love of our Saviour, has to this day had no
effect upon it: They have hitherto patched up a
religion of their own making, and are really and
truly dead as a stone to the merits of Jesus Christ,
quite cold to his loving heart, and without the least
inward acquaintance with him. Should you feel
and

and think, this is my case, so it is with my heart, then behold there is a remedy.

**"In Jesu's blood a healing pow'r doth dwell,
Enough to melt the hardest heart in hell."**

He only is the good husbandman, and can turn the wilderness into the garden of God, the flint-stone into a springing well. He only knows how to melt and soften the most stupid and hardened state, and turn the heart of stone into a heart of flesh. Turn ye to him, and learn what Job saith, "It is God that maketh my heart soft;" or the spouse in Solomon's song, "My soul melted while my Beloved spake," Cant. v. 6. He that spake to the rock in the wilderness, when the waters gushed out, he alone can make you right, dissolve the ice and coldness in your hearts, "and make the rocks flow at his presence." Be your hearts never so stupid, hard, and stubborn, be your hearts never so cold or frozen, one drop of the blood he shed will make it happy and tender, and kindle such a flame of divine love there, as "many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown." Come ye then, come ye to these waters, and you shall be eternally saved, and out of all danger on this account.

But there is yet another danger, and that is, being ashamed of Christ and his gospel. This has gone far with some poor people, they could not follow Jesus out of the camp, bearing his reproach, but rather than be mocked, or laughed at, or counted a fool, they have by and by been seduced from following the Lamb. Our Saviour has said positively, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he comes with his Father's glory, and with the holy angels."

You know how far it went with Peter in this respect; he had continued several years a close disciple and follower of our Saviour, till that night when Jesus was arraigned, and then he was really ashamed, and was got warming himself by the fire. He had no business either in the place or in the company, and this became the sad occasion of his fall; for when a silly maid made her game, and called him a disciple of Christ, he denied it, and at last swore he did not know him. How far it would have gone with him I do not know, if Jesus had not turned and looked upon him, and then "he went out and wept bitterly;" nor did he ever rest till Jesus rose from the dead and pardoned him.

As long as the doctrines and gospel of our Saviour pass unmolested in the world, in a town, or country, it is easy to go among his people; but when it becomes scandalous, when men raise ten thousand lies and slanders upon it and its professors, when none but fools, low-lived people, and mad persons, are said to be its abettors, then many are offended, and they are really ashamed of their Lord Christ. But methinks I hear some say, O'no; God forbid that I should be ashamed of Christ. I hope one may go to heaven without making one's self ridiculous, without all this to do. I am not ashamed of the word of God, but only I have no mind to be a fool. Sure if I keep to my place of worship, and do my duty in a creditable way, I shall be accepted.—Whoever you are, that so reason, take care; I am afraid if the carpenter's Son was now in the flesh among us, and went about with a few poor fishermen and women, you would despise his meanness; should you hear his plain simple discourses, which all men derided, you would be ashamed, and walk no more with him. If you are upright, then do not care if heaven and earth laugh you to scorn; be content to be slighted, abused, scorned,

scorned, and count it an honour to suffer shame for his name's sake. Stay a little while, and you will see who will have reason to be ashamed; not the souls who have followed the Lamb, who have put on his righteousness, and obtained of him the Spirit of adoption, these shall not be ashamed; but those shall be ashamed who have not his white raiment, who were once too wise, too prudent, too proud to be his disciples. The Lord grant you may escape this danger, that ye may be worthy to stand before the Son of man.

There is yet another danger which those people are in, and that is, when persecution ariseth because of the word. Some despise the shame, and in a philosophical spirit disregard it, but when the persecution comes, when the parents will disown the children, the master turn away his servants, the trader refuse to buy or sell with you; when threatenings, ill words, blows, disinheriting, and danger of losing a good deal comes, those who before withstood other opposition, now yield, and Satan gains his point. The blessed awakening ceases, the love of the word of God is stifled, and the soul turns to the world, and chuses its portion in this life. Would to God such people would think of "what advantage would it be to them to gain all the world and lose their own souls?" Or how could they bear to hear our Saviour say to them in that day, "Ye loved the world, your riches, your company, better than me," or be put in mind, "Remember, when a little storm arose on my account, ye forsook me and fled." May this also not happen to us? May this, O God, be far from us all! But here, before I conclude this part of my discourse, let me ask, Why is it that souls can be swayed by such things? How is it a person, who is disposed to be saved, can be turned out of the way and be offended? It is really

because their hearts were never made tender by the blood of Jesus, they wanted a thorough awakening there. Had they ever once seen how God purchased them with his own blood, how he valued and loved them, even so as to die for them: had his love ever melted their hearts, or had they any depth of love to him and his merits; had they ever felt deeply his sword, like a plough-share, break up the fallow ground, and pierce into the bottom of their corrupt and spoiled nature, so that they were deeply sensible of their want, their great need of our Saviour's wounds and sufferings to make them whole, they would not, they could not have been turned from him by any means; all shame and opposition, all losses and threatenings would be welcome to them, and the sword, and fire, and prison, or whatever hell or wicked men could devise, would be very little, so they might but get or win Jesus Christ. O pray ye, that our compassionate Saviour may break the rock of your hearts in pieces, and give you a new heart and a new spirit, and save you from receiving any longer the seed upon stony ground.

"Those that receive the seed among thorns," our Saviour says, "are such as hear the word, but the deceitfulness of riches, the cares of this world, and pleasures of this life, mingle with it and choke it, so that it bears no fruit, but is lost."

How many are there in the world who easily perceive how dangerous a careless and giddy mind is; how bad a condition their's is also, where the heart is like a rock, and where shame and persecution have so great sway and influence, but never dream of their own cares, pleasures, or love of money; whereas, dear me! these are in equal danger with them.

I will speak first to you, ye over and above careful people; you who can rise early and late take rest to get the common bread, and provide treasure upon earth;

earth; ye cumbered Marthas, who are always busy and industrious, but forget "the one thing needful, the good part which shall not be taken away."

To what purpose are ye so full of cares and thoughts? Why do ye eat the bread of carefulness, and neglect the true Bread that came down from heaven, and that raiment which should make you all glorious within, clean and white, ready for the marriage of the Lamb?

Ye know the persons who made their excuses for not coming to the supper of the King's son, were of your sort; "one had bought oxen, and must prove them; another had purchased land, and must see it; another was engaged in his farm, another busy in his trade and merchandise, and yet another was married, had a wife and children to provide for, and so prayed to be excused;" but hear only the answer of the King, when the servants returned and told him, he said, "Not one of them shall taste of my supper." Let me advise you a little; •Henceforth be industrious and diligent, but only do not forget that you are servants, and not masters. Look upon all you have as if it was not your's, but your Master Christ's. Let losses or disappointments happen, place it to his account, and take you thought about the living Bread, that is, Christ's flesh, and the living Water, that is, his blood. Make it sure to you that you have a part in these, and that Jesus has prepared a place in his Father's house, and you shall be happy. Ye who have been like Martha, be now like Mary, and sit down at Jesus's feet, and "hearken and learn of him, and you shall find rest to your busy and careful souls." It is not your having a family to provide for, a farm, a trade, your being a dealer, a master, or a servant, a husband or wife, a child or parent, that can hinder you to be saved, if your heart be but right.

But as the garden brings up weeds, as it were, of itself, which would choke what is sown therein, if it be not kept weeded, so are our hearts; there is sin enough to render all the good seed sown there in vain, unless Jesus's eyes of fire try our hearts, and burn up all the useless and worldly cares, and those sins which else choke his word and make it unfruitful.

I will speak also to you who are cheated with the deceitfulness of riches, who perhaps never once in your life thought there was any danger in being rich, but have wished for it with all your hearts. Our Saviour has wisely called it the deceitfulness of riches, because such it really is, and no other. The poor cheat themselves in hoping to become rich, and those who have this world deceive themselves, and imagine themselves wealthy, and having much, and have not yet got the least spark of the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. They do not know that they have any part in the kingdom of God, or in the gold tried in the fire, which is the righteousness and merits of Christ Jesus. O such, with all they have, are poor and miserable. What good did all the rich man's barns, full of corn and plenty, and his bags and chests of gold do him, when God called him, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee?" Or of what use was it to Belshazzar that he could feast with all his nobles, and eat and drink out of bowls of silver and gold, when the same night a hand-writing upon the wall tells him, "His kingdom is given away from him, and he is weighed in the balances, and found wanting. Or of what comfort was it to Dives, that just before he had been clothed in scarlet, and purple, and fine linen, and fared sumptuously or delicately every day, and now must lift up his eyes in the torment of hell, and want a drop of water to cool his tongue? They were deceived with the deceitfulness of riches,

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and forgot how hard it was for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. But whoever among you have hitherto been mistaken, hear me a little: Are you poor now? then learn to be content, and seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and you shall be rich. Mind it not, though here you may be a vessel of dishonour, like Lazarus, only let our dear Saviour be your sure portion; lay up treasure in heaven, get your part ascertained in his merits and atonement, and indeed you shall be rich, you shall have a kingdom that cannot be removed, and be yourselves upon the throne of God, kings and priests to the Lamb for ever. Are you rich: Have you much of this world? Then be faithful stewards, and cast your bread upon the waters, that you may find it again; and let it be your chief, your only study, to ensure your interest in Christ, and lay hold on eternal life. Do not look upon yourselves as better than others, nor value a possession which in one hour may leave you destitute as a beggar: be rich in faith, in love, and good works; in all other respects be poor, and as one that needs the precious blood of the Lamb, and his salvation and pardon daily and hourly; so lie at his gate, like Lazarus, full of sores, and desire to be fed with the crumbs which fall from his table; and resolve to continue a poor despised disciple of your despised Master, and come follow him, and you shall be rich, "you shall have treasure in heaven, raiment and jewels which no moth or rust can corrupt, and gold, which no thief can break through and steal;" and when you must go hence, and be no more seen, though you can carry nothing with you of all your goods or temporal blessings, you shall be received by "the King of kings, and Lord of Lords," into the New Jerusalem, and go no more out. O may our merciful Lord and Saviour, in this sense, make us rich, for his name sake!

I must yet speak to one sort of people more, whose hearts have received the word of God among thorns ; and these are those who are led away with the pleasures of this life. I fear many who hear me are of this poor deceived number. Many have lived ten, twenty, thirty years in the world, and perhaps their whole lives, and never knew that what they call their innocent mirth, lawful recreations, and harmless pleasures, have been the very thorns which have choked the word. But let me reason with you also a little, for else I should be inexcusable. I know what the pleasures of this life are ; they are what St. Paul calls " the pleasures of sin for a season," and such as Moses left in the court of Pharaoh for Christ's sake. They are like Job's friends, miserable comforters indeed. In vain does one dress when his poor soul is naked, and ashamed before God ; in vain he decks his body, when his spirit is without the righteousness of faith, and the beauty and comeliness which our Saviour puts on a soul, when he washes it and adorns it for the eternal bride-chamber ; however he may amuse himself thus a little, his naked estate and vile heart must sometimes appear before him, and make him trembling think, Who knows but this painted and decorated wretch may ere long be summoned into eternity ? And this deforms and sullies all his gaiety and finery. In vain another runs to the play-house, or visits some place of diversion and pastime ; a guilty mind and conscience must sometimes speak, and turn all their best sweets to gall and wormwood. In vain a third keeps company, and with unlawful and wanton looks, airs, and words, stirs up the lustful fire ; it shall be like a vulture at the heart. A dread unspeakable succeeds close at the heels of such delights ; a horror like the shadow of death, and secret remorse and stings, plague the breast where such fires burn, and

and all are like the book John ate, however sweet it is in the mouth, in the belly shall it be very bitter. In vain a fourth feasts, and drinks new wine and strong drink, or sings away his days, or with riding, walking, hunting, or play, thinks to make himself happy; the wisest of all men tried all these things, and got all the delights of the sons of men, and at last confessed, what we all know to be true, "In the midst of laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness;" and a wiser man than Solomon hath said, "Wo be to them that laugh now, for they shall mourn and weep." But why is it that souls are so bewitched and allured? Why are the greatest part of mankind so deceived? The old serpent that deceives all them that dwell on the earth has persuaded them, that else they shall always be mopes, and melancholy in the world; nor have they understood that "the ways of Wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace." Ye foolish people, if ye did but know how really fine, and like a bride prepared for the bridegroom, a soul is who has put on the Lord Jesus, ye would slight heartily all other finery for evermore. Come and be embraced one moment by the Friend of sinners, and receive his pardon, and nothing would so affect you for ever, nothing so please you as the tragedy of the Son of David; his tears and heaviness should always keep you chearful, and his bitterness of soul, when he felt the sting of death, would be your hourly happiness and joy.

Ye wanton and lustful men and women, come ye to Gethsemane, and see those cold drops of sweat which fell down to the ground like blood, from the Holy One; this shall root out, and extinguish, and wash away for ever all the impure flames which have so racked your mind, and exposed you to the most horrible dread on this side eternity. Our Sa-

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viour pities you, and is ready to save you from all your sins. There is no lust, no unholy and wild fire, no cursed inbred lechery, and whorish and unclean thought or wish which his blood and death-sweat cannot utterly abolish and drown. If you knew in what safety they dwell, with what peace they go forward, and how calm and undisturbed they are who are saved and made chaste, and washed white in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, you would not once more look back, or desire again to be entangled in the old sins ; no, you would bless the Lamb day and night who had delivered you and saved you from so great misery and danger. Ye drunkards and rioters, ye lovers of feasting and banqueting, come ye to the marriage-feast of the Lamb. Jesus invites you to drink freely of the fountain of life, and to eat of the hidden manna. Ye who are fond of music, come and hearken to our Saviour, for his voice is sweet ; all the music of the angels is nothing else but the echo of his love and forgiveness. Do you love a concert, come up and you shall see ten thousand harping upon their harps before the Lamb that was slain, and millions of trumpets blowing to the honour of his name. Do ye esteem songs ? O get your lips touched with a coal from off the altar, and you shall join in the song of Moses and the Lamb upon mount Sion. If that mouth, which was once struck by the soldiers, kiss you and seal your pardon, the songs of the drunkards will no more be pleasing, nor the shouts of such as make merry ; you will feel a joy which they understand not, and your lips shall utter a song which shall please your Beloved, and be the language of a heart that has overcome and obtained mercy in God our Saviour. You shall be happy witnesses that our Redeemer's service is perfect freedom, and that his children are the only happy people
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in the world. No secret misgivings check their joys, nor fears of an unexpected summons to another world; no shuddering at the approach of judgment, nor stings of a guilty conscience, interrupt their bliss, or hinder their real peace. No, they have our Saviour with them, they foretaste the pleasures of his right hand, and are happy, quite happy in his everlasting arms, and in his wounds, like doves in the clefts of the rock. O that all here were thus blessed, and had the Lord for their God, and in him were thus blessed and saved.

I come now, in the last place,*to speak of such as receive the seed in good ground; and these are such as hear the gospel and receive it in an honest and good heart, in a heart sincerely desirous to be saved and made right in our Saviour's sight. These hear the promises, and with all diligence, tears, and prayers, expect and look for the fulfilling of them; and who cannot rest till they have found redemption in the blood of Christ, his righteousness and salvation, and have his holy Spirit apply his bruises to their pained hearts, to ease them with the full assurance of their part in the book of life, and of their place being prepared in heaven. As ground tilled and opened receives in the seed, and it springs up and bears fruit, so such people have their hearts truly awakened and opened, to receive the seed of eternal life. No waiting enemy steals away the words of our Saviour; like Mary, they ponder them in their hearts, and keep them as the most precious treasure, and shall bring that blessing down upon them, "Because thou hast kept my word, I will keep thee in the day that shall try all them that dwell upon the earth; thou shalt not die, thou shalt not taste of death" No unbrokenness and hardness hinders our Saviour to see of his travail in them and be satisfied: No shame of the cross, no
fear

fear of men, nor cares of the world, nor deceitfulness of riches, nor pleasures of this life hinder them to bring forth fruit to the glory of the good Husbandman. They love our Saviour with all their heart; they are honest, and would not deceive themselves; but, till they had found our Saviour, and were sealed by him to everlasting life, never would be easy; and now he that smote them with the sword of his mouth has healed them; now they have obtained the privilege or power to become sons of God; they are saved, they have found the merits and righteousness of our dear Saviour; they are assured of his favour, they are written in his book, and wait the time of their dissolution with patience, or, as our Saviour says, "bring forth fruit with patience:" their fruit is all good works, but especially praise and love to that Lamb, the good Sower, who first loved them and prepared them for himself. These are they who have ears and hear the voice of their Beloved, the voice of the good Shepherd, the Son of man, and have eternal life through his name: "They have eyes and see his salvation, they have honest and good hearts, and" understand and are converted." May our Lord God and Saviour make you of this happy number! Amen.

DISCOURSE XVII.

THE LOST SHEEP, PIECE OF SILVER, AND PRODIGAL SON.

LUKE. xv. 2.

This Man receiveth Sinners.

IN this chapter we have an account, that, during Jesus's ministration and preaching, all the publicans and sinners drew near to hear him, which so offended the religious Jews, that they murmured and shewed their displeasure, because he suffered such a rabble to follow him, and more, because, instead of exclaiming against these ungodly people, whose wicked lives and sins were known to all, and instead of thundering out the curses of the law to them, or shewing his just anger to such offenders, he spoke mildly to them, and graciously received them all.

This caused them to give him that character to defame him among the pious and more devout sort, "Behold the Friend of publicans and sinners;" and again, "This man receiveth and eateth with them."

I suppose this served to prejudice many of the righteous Scribes and Pharisees against him, because they had always shunned the persons he was familiar with, and had esteemed them as bastards and not sons of Abraham, and who were under the curse, children of Belial, and excommunicate; they knew no righteousness but that of works, and which consisted in observing the law, and being strictly obedient to all

the precepts of Moses, as the Rabbins explained them ; and to these they had added many of the traditions of the fathers, in relation to their often praying, making of proselytes, washing the hands before meat, and when they come from the market, &c. beside a multitude of ceremonies, in observing which they placed much holiness, and condemned vehemently such as were not so scrupulous and rigid, because without it they hardly believed a man could be safe. They had carried the matter so far, that the end of the law was not answered, but, as our Saviour says, " was made of none effect through their traditions ;" for they made their first blunder in supposing at all, that righteousness came by the law, and that the dispensation of Moses was calculated of God to make men righteous, whereas the sole intent of the law was, to convince every man that should hear it, that he was a sinner, and under the curse justly ; it was ordained to stop the mouth of every man who would fancy he was blameless and had a good heart, and to make all the world guilty before God. In this respect it paved the way for the everlasting righteousness brought in by Christ Jesus, because it condemns and curses every one who has not continued in all things and in every point and tittle of the law to do it ; and since no soul can escape so rigorous a condemnation, but all are guilty and have sinned more or less, and may have no hope from the law, nor can be justified thereby, the soul who would willingly be saved, and who is conscious of his sin, and of his being under the curse of the law justly, who sees that it aims and strikes at the heart, condemns the least thought and desire, and requires a " worshipping the Lord with all the heart, with all the mind, and with all the strength," I say, when this is known, and which is clearly the end of the law, the soul sinks down before God, and cries out, " What shall I do

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to be saved? Whither shall I go for mercy?" and thus sees and feels the need of a Saviour, and of redemption from under the law, and of a better righteousness than our own. Hence it is that the Holy Ghost sent prophets and scribes instructed out of the kingdom of heaven, to teach such men to "look to him (the Messiah) and be saved." They taught, "He shall be called The Lord our Righteousness. In his days shall Israel be saved. They shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. He shall finish iniquity and make an end of sin, obtain reconciliation and bring in everlasting righteousness. To him shall all flesh come. To him shall the gathering of the people be. He shall save Israel from all his sins." This served to enlighten such as cried to him in their trouble, and who sat in the shadow of death, and comforted them with hopes of the Redeemer, for whom the sincere Jews looked and waited, wishing to see his day till he came. But in the Jewish church there were men who had otherwise interpreted the law, and preached that it could make the observers of it righteous; and this sort prevailed exceedingly, so that the chief of the priests and the learned men were of this mind, and these were called the Pharisees. St. Paul, and many of our Saviour's disciples, were of this sect before they knew him, but none could be in his company and not observe, how in all his doctrines, parables, and discourses, he sharply condemns the righteousness of the Pharisees, and says, "they have their reward," and that, "except we get a better righteousness than theirs, we can in no case enter the kingdom of heaven," calling all that they boasted of, "a whitening of the wall, painting and garnishing sepulchres, and washing the outside of cups and dishes," i. e. it was an outward and affected righteousness, it was good in the sight of men, and adorned and made white the person who had it before

the world, but it did not go deep, it did not wash the inner man of the heart, it did not cleanse the spoiled and bad nature, nor make the soul "all-glorious within." This only is effected by an immediate work of grace, through the inspiration of the Spirit and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. This is a divine work, and without which all righteousness is filthy rags. This is sure and certain, if there could have been a law given which could have made men righteous, then righteousness had come by the law of Moses; but it was impossible, considering our fall and inbred sin, to have been made righteous by any law or works, or in any way but by that means which our tender and merciful Father, God, contrived before the world began, and that was by means of the blood and wounds of his Son Jesus, and by his obedience to the death of the cross.

It was men ignorant of this great design of the God of Abraham, and who had received the false opinion that was common in those times, of there being more righteous than others, and of being saved by works, that stumbled at seeing Jesus receive sinners, and which made them slight and blaspheme him on that account; but it is to be observed, that to vindicate his conduct, and to unfold before the world the counsel of God and his mind to save sinners, he delivers three parables, in which the love of the blessed Trinity to lost man is described and exhibited in an uncommon manner, and of which I purpose to speak particularly to day. Would to God all that hear me might be happily convinced, the self-righteous, that they have hitherto mistook, and now come and buy of Jesu's raiment, and be clothed indeed, and be made righteous in his sight, whose eyes try the hearts and reins; and the profane and careless, that they may leave all their old ways, and fly to Jesus, and be saved, for "this man receiveth sinners."

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There are many thousands who (as I myself have done) make the same mistakes the Pharisees did, and place true religion in a strict life, in obeying the letter of the law, to which they add traditions and commands of men, such as praying so many times a day, fasting so often in the week, going so much to church, performing such a task of duties, &c. and with all together they make a righteousness, and when they have served it up, and made them aprons, like Adam, of these, they will not suffer the thought, that they are yet naked, but value themselves upon account of their goodness, and despise others, and think, "God, I thank thee that I am not so bad as other men." It is for their sakes, as well as to draw poor deluded slaves of sin to him, that Jesus delivered himself in this gracious manner. O may he speak and write his mind in this great matter on every heart!

There are some things chiefly observable in these parables, and which must not be passed over unheeded. In the first parable, which is of the Shepherd and the Lost Sheep, the love and care of the Son of God is displayed; in the second, which speaks of the woman and her piece of money, the diligence and love of the Holy Spirit is shewn; and in the third, which is of the returning child to his parent, the love and joy of the Father is expressed over a repenting sinner. All are to set forth the riches of the grace of God to mankind, and to prove, to our unspeakable joy and comfort, that "this Man receiveth sinners," and rejoiceth over them that come to him, as a shepherd over a sheep that had strayed away, and which he has now found; and as a woman is glad to find a piece of money that she had lost, and as a father rejoiceth to receive his child again who had left him and was as if dead.

The holy Jesus, when he preached this discourse, was surrounded with sinners; all were come to hear
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him, the ragged thieves, the wanton harlots, the stupid drunkards, who had wasted their estates and health in a debauched and intemperate life, the usurers, the swearers, and sabbath-breakers, crowd attentive round the Most Holy. Afar off and at a distance stand the murmuring Scribes and the righteous and prudent people, who would have liked to hear him, if such a dirty, nasty rabble were not his followers, and if but the great, the genteel and rich would go too, or if the rulers and learned but approved of him, and if he did not countenance and encourage that wicked multitude so much, or if he would but preach a little more against their sinful ways, and commend a little more a courteous and benevolent spirit, and preach about good works and charity to his hearers, and tell ignorant people their duty.

I suppose they beheld him with scorn, and disdained to be one of that man's disciples. As Michal, the daughter of Saul and wife of David, looked out at her window and saw her royal husband dressed in an ephod, and come dancing through the streets among a company of maidens before the ark, and despised him, saying, with a sneer, "How glorious did the king of Israel look to day!" so did these men, who murmured because Jesus received sinners; they despised him for it with all their hearts, and were offended. They were too good to join with those who found mercy at his hands; they were too wise to imagine they needed repentance as much as they, or that they were upon a level in God's eyes with the worst of all; they were too prudent to be ever seen with him, and so went away offended.

O ask your hearts, my dear friends, Have not you been of this proud self-righteous mind? Have not you such a high spirit? Look upon the Redeemer with all the publicans and sinners hearing him, and think, if you should not have been ashamed to be
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among them? However it has been, now blush at his feet, and pray him to forgive you your false prudence, your self-righteousness, and pride, and sit down at his feet poor in spirit, and hear the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

He begins, "What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which he hath lost until he find it? and, when he hath found it, he layeth it upon his shoulders rejoicing; and when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost: I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance."

This parable our Saviour seems to address to the murmuring Pharisees, but in the hearing of the sinners; that both might be edified; the one learn humility, and see how equal the Saviour's ways are; and the other, who had wandered, learn how glad their Shepherd is at their return, and so come back to him and be saved.

Jesus is the man who, of all his vast unmeasured flock, never lost one poor sheep. All the heavens and every world, visible and invisible, with all their hosts, are his; this world, compared to the creation, is only like a drop of the bucket, or like a grain of sand in the balance, or like one sheep in comparison of an hundred. If a man should let a drop fall from the bucket, he would not think of it; and if a man had an hundred sheep, and should lose one which should be chased away by a wolf, or borne away by a lion or a bear, he might easily let it go, and think, it is better to lose it than I risque my life in search of it, or lose many days' time and spend much labour and pain in the pursuit of it, especially as he
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had yet so many left ; but our good Shepherd thought otherwise ; the greatness of his kingdom, the innumerable worlds which were his, and all the inhabitants of the heavens, the angels and spirits which are beyond all number, could not make him think little of the loss of this poor world, when Satan, like a lion, entered the fold, and led astray, like a sheep, Adam and his wretched posterity ; our Shepherd saw it from on high, nor would let it pass easily ; it lay from eternity upon his heart, and in due time he became their Saviour. An hireling might have let the wandering sheep perish, and only thought of the ninety and nine who were yet in the pastures ; but a good husbandman would rise up early and travel far, would leave his flocks in the fields, and seek carefully that which he had lost ; he would search every hill and every valley, enquire through every plain, and spare no pains till he had met with it ; and should he find it torn by dogs, dirty with driving through the bogs and deep places, he would not therefore leave it, but would bind up the wounds, wash off the filth, and lay it upon his shoulders, and come home joyfully ; he would tell his friends and neighbours of his success, and not reflect upon all his sore labour in seeking it, since he had now got it again safely. This is the heart of our dear Saviour ; he put on the form and office of a shepherd, left all his angels, all heavenly worlds and blessed spirits, and came a thirty-years journey into this world to seek his lost sheep. Often the “ sun burnt him by day, and the frosts consumed him by night ;” often he sat down weary, and travelled through the wilderness weeping as he went, and when he found his sheep, it was in the hand of the enemy, in the mouth and jaws of the devouring lion ; the dragon had seized it, and was ready to make an end of it ; to redeem it, it cost him that severe conflict in the garden, when he wrestled
till

till his sweat was like great drops of blood falling down to the ground; nor did he leave it, but continued in the combat till his back was sore and bloody with scourging, his head torn with the thorns and briars of the wilderness, and till his hands and feet were cut through and loaded with bonds and chains. In this condition he was when his sore hands caught the prey out of the destroyer's teeth, and with his rent and bruised feet he trod down the dragon and the lion upon the mount of Calvary, and "laid down his life for his sheep." This is that dear Saviour, who, when a soul repents and comes to him, takes it upon his shoulders; there he bears their burdens and sorrows, and carries it in his bosom, and in his loving arms, and when he has washed the polluted sinner in his precious blood, and forgiven him, when he has healed him of those wounds which caused him such smart and misery, and given him his peace, then he lets all his saints and angels know, "I have found the sheep which I had lost; rejoice with me, for the lamb that went astray is returned to the shepherd and bishop of his soul. The little one that had wandered away from me, and for whom I have travailed and been in pain, he that caused all my grief and labour, that child that you once saw in mine enemy's hands, and who warred against me, he that trampled under foot my words, and would not receive my reproofs so long, is come back to me." This causes a new joy among the angels, and this begins properly when a sinner is come to our Saviour by faith, and receives the knowledge of his salvation; it is repeated when he lands safely above, and shall be again renewed when Jesus shall divide among the people as a shepherd between his flocks, and when he shall be found at the right-hand with the sheep, and thenceforward shall that joy be continued through all eternity.

Also

Also as a man rejoices more over a lost sheep when he has recovered it safe and sound, than over all the others which went not astray, so has our Saviour more joy over a poor soul which had left him, and over the world which was lost but is now found through his redemption, than over all those spirits who keep their first estate, and more than over all the angels who have not sinned, and so not needed repentance; and far, far more, than over all those self-righteous people who glory in their strict lives from their youth up, and dream that they need no repentance. O that those who hear me would to-day rise up and leave all, and follow their true Pastor! What joy would you cause in heaven, and in the breasts of the angels of God! and what joy would our Saviour have to see so many wandering sheep return home to him! It was for your sakes chiefly this parable was spoken. My guilty brethren and sisters, be encouraged thereby to return to him who made you, and whose sheep (though spoiled and strayed) you are, and you shall be received by him with joy everlasting. Let your hearts answer, "Lo! I come to do thy will, my God!"

The second parable is after this manner: "What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one, does not light a candle and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it, and when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost: Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

In this parable our Saviour teaches the care and diligence of the Spirit to seek and win back souls to the Lamb. Under the similitude of a woman, is the Holy Ghost described in other places of the scripture; sometimes as a mother, a nurse, a com-

forter, and that in the prophets as well as in the New Testament ; for instance, “ As a mother comforteth her son, so will I comfort thee.” When Solomon spake afar off of the Holy Spirit’s new bearing the church of God out of the side of the second Adam, he says, “ Under the apple-tree (so was Christ crucified called, because he excelled all the sons of men, as the apple-trees did the trees, and which gave meat to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and shadow and rest to the weary and fatigued) thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee.” Again, “ My beloved is the only one of her mother.” Our Saviour confirms this in saying, “ Ye must be born again of the Holy Ghost.” Also in another parable he speaks of the Holy Spirit when he says, “ The kingdom of heaven is like a woman who took leaven and put it into three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” It is the office and work of the Holy Ghost to minister to the saints in the name of Jesus: he comes in his name, and dwells with them; he takes of the things of Christ and shews it to them; he glorifies him in them; and above all, it is the place of the Spirit to take the leaven of Christ’s body and blood, and hide it in the three measures of meal, that is, in our body, soul, and spirit; and like as leaven works and operates thro’ the meal till all is fit for use, so is the blood of Jesus conveyed to a believer, which continues to operate through body, soul, and spirit, till all the old nature is purged away, and we are fit for our heavenly Father’s use; or, as St. Ignatius says, ‘ till we become pure bread for our Beloved.’ This is sweetly expressed in a well-known prayer, “ Grant us, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and so to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean through his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood,

blood, and that he may evermore dwell in us, and we in him."

The Holy Ghost loves us even as Jesus loves, and is one with our Saviour in our salvation. He looks upon us dearer than pieces of silver, and more valuable than fine gold. As a good mother of the house seeks when a piece of money is dropt, and ceases not her cares and search till she has found it, and then rejoices with her friends, so the Holy Ghost lights a candle in the heart, illuminates the mind that was asleep, and "the foolish heart that was darkened." He causes a ray of divine light to shine within, brings a beam from the flaming eyes of Jesus into the close recesses of the soul; he exposes all the hidden sins, the nasty corners, the dangerous places in which the soul, like a piece of silver, is lost; he sweeps away all the outward sins, the rubbish of gaiety, pleasures, and lusts; he cleanses the outward man, and will not let it suffice till the poor lost piece of our Saviour's treasure is found and counted among his jewels. In this labour is the Lord the Spirit employed, often many years, and with indefatigable patience he strives with souls till he has prevailed and brought them to Jesus, and then "is there joy in the presence of the angels of God." He does not grudge all the years in which he called the soul, and "waited to be gracious;" he forgives the sin of quenching the light, and loving and choosing to walk in darkness, the resisting his divine and maternal motions, and preferring earthly things to heavenly, and inspires all the angels with joy at the conversion of the soul, whom he esteems treasure, and the very reward of Jesus, the hire and wages of our Saviour, his riches and jewels. O may we all be of the happy number, when he shall count them up, and they

they shall be to him for a crown and a diadem, and an eternal glory.

The third parable is of the Father and his Prodigal Son, and is the most lively picture of the heart of God our Father toward his younger rebellious sons, the children of men.

It was man that was so foolish to leave his father's house, and go out and spend his portion of grace in riotous and careless living in the world; ever since the fall of Adam we have done thus; we have lived in a far country, in an estate afar off from the Lord, and there we have wasted our substance. As in the parable the son is said to "spend all in riotous living," so does every man: one trifles away his precious time in play, another heaps up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather and enjoy them; and others, who put on a more sober appearance, live still at a distance from their heavenly Father, and perhaps content themselves, like the prodigal son, "with the husks which swine do eat," with the things of this life, or with the false religion which consists only in name and shew, and is not really the knowledge of Christ and his love in the heart. The departure of the son at first of his own choice, sets forth our free-will, which is to wander perpetually, and teaches, that our fall was of ourselves. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." But our Saviour describes the son at ease, and pleased with his luxury and wantonness among harlots, till "there arose a famine in the land, and he began to be in want." This is when the eyes of a sinner are opened, and he sees to what all his sins have brought him, into what misery he is plunged and sunk: There is a mighty famine in the world in which he lives, "not of bread, or of water, but of the word of God and of the bread of life." He sighs that he has been so foolish to leave the Lord his Father's

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house, and begins to be in want ; he wants forgiveness, he begins to want a Saviour, he is restless and uneasy, all his sins afflict and trouble him, he wants peace in his heart, he begins to want a rest for his soul ; and this beginning of want increases till he hungers and thirsts for righteousness and is filled. He went and joined himself to a citizen of the country, who sent him to feed swine, and he would fain have filled himself with the husks, the grains, which the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him." Thus our Lord describes their state, who, when a little awakened to a sense of their misery and want, get into company, and join themselves to the men of this world, strive to divert away their uneasiness, and get out of the reach of his voice who daily whispers, *Thou art poor and miserable, come unto me.* By his feeding of the swine, we may understand all time-serving, all cringing to the lying and false world, and stooping to be the vassal and drudge of the devil and the servant of sin. What are the Epicureans, the sensualists, but slaves ? What is the nobleman more than the peasant, who is captive to wine and women ? What the general and admiral, with all their bravery, when conquered by pride and lust, and bond-servants of their passions ? What are the highest and greatest more than the beggar, the soldier or common sailor, when they creep and bow to the world only for gain, pleasures, or honour ? They are servants of swine, and as the prodigal would fain have filled himself with the husks which they eat, so do they, and so have we all done. How have we strove to satisfy our poor souls with their diversions, and make ourselves happy and easy in their way but could not ? All our endeavours were mercifully blasted, and we rendered wretched more and more above measure.

It

It was in this state he recollected his father's house ; poverty drove him to think of going back : He thought, How many servants hath my father who have bread enough, and I perish with hunger ! What though I have rebelled, and brought all this misery upon me, " I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son ; make me, I pray thee, thine hired servant." This is just the condition, and these the thoughts of a true penitent. He thinks, O how happy are the children of God ! How happy his servants the holy angels ! O that I had but the lowest place among them ! O that I might but have leave to call God my Father ! The Holy Ghost makes use of this opportunity, and when Jesus has sought him out, and the spirit has enlightened him thus far, he shews what a loving Father he has, who spared not his dear Son for him, and the poor sinner trembles and cries, is afraid to ask mercy, and dares not stay in the state he is in ; he resolves at last to venture to him, and, like Esther, thinks, " If I perish, I will perish at the feet of the king."

" And he arose and went." He did not only propose it, but did it. There are many who often speak and think of it, but never go, they stay and perish afar off ; but lo ! he comes, " and his father saw him a great way off, and had compassion on him, and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him." O mark every word, my dear friends, and be astonished at the way in which our Saviour describes his reception ; he does not say the son ran to the father ; he was weary, faint, and ashamed, and could not, nor did he see his father first, but his father him, and then neither did he send a servant to order him to depart, and let him know he would not see him or own him ; he did not upbraid him

with his vile and scandalous behaviour, with his disgraceful life, and just want and beggary, but "ran to meet him." It seems as if he had been looking out for him, and often with wishful eyes watching the way he went, to see if his poor child would once return; and now he meets him, "falls upon his neck, and kisses him." With what emphasis and affection does our Saviour express the whole? He was fit to describe his father's tender heart; he knew it, and he only; and thus he does to our great comfort.

When a poor self-condemned sinner sets his face toward Zion, and comes trembling back, however vile in his own eyes, God the Father beholds him with joy. He has "long looked down on the children of men, to see if there were any that would turn," and though the poor soul does not at first discern the Lord, yet the Lord sees him afar off in his sad and lamentable state, he views him "weary and heavy laden," he understands his heaviness, his forlorn and destitute condition, surveys his poverty and wants, "and has compassion on him, he pities him as a father pities his son, he runs, he makes haste to help him." As a father meets his only child whom he had bewailed for dead, or given over for lost, and falls upon his neck and kisses him, so our Father receives his poor children, he embraces them and kisses them upon heart and soul, he makes his love felt, and kindles such a love in his children's breasts as can never be extinguished or forgotten.

The son began to say, "Father, I have sinned, and am not worthy to be thy son," but had not time to ask a servant's place, for his father prevented him by saying to his servants, "Bring the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring upon his finger, and shoes upon his feet, and kill the fatted calf,

calf,

calf, and let us eat and be merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again, was lost, but is now found."

The wretch that beggared himself with harlots, and did not deserve the worst garment, must have the best robe; and he that had squandered away so much gold that he never deserved to see the least of it more, now must be adorned with a ring, and his feet must be shod, and a banquet, a feast prepared, that all the house might share in the joy of the father.

Thus and thus shall it be done to you, my dear brethren, who return for mercy to your Father, the best robe, that is, the righteousness of Christ, shall be brought to cover you, and to make you "all-glorious within," this shall be your beautiful garment and white robe. He shall put the ring upon your finger; you shall be favoured, like Thomas, to put your finger into the nail-prints of Jesus, and be convinced he is your Lord and your God, that shall seal you to the day of redemption, and you shall know what that means, "his hands are like rings of beryl;" your feet shall be shod with the sandals of peace, that you may go on your way rejoicing. The great marriage-supper, the feast of the sons of God above, is preparing for you, and all is to welcome you home. But come, and all the angels, the prophets, the martyrs, and apostles of the Lamb shall hear your Father confess you. The moment you give him your heart, the moment when he shall kiss and forgive you, God, your dear Father God, shall say before his children and servants, "This my son was dead but is alive again, this your brother was lost, but is now found."

Thus does our Saviour preach to the publicans and sinners; and what parable or what discourse in all the bible so sets forth the free grace and love of

the whole Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? Let it affect you, my dear friends; remember they are the words of Jesus Christ, and are spoken to you, and let it force you to go after him, and compel you to come into his church and be saved. He is the same good and gracious Lord as when he spake these words, and suffered the sinners to hear him; his aim is the same, it is to save sinners, and to win them to him; his mind is the same, he would have it yet be preached, that "this man receiveth sinners," and all who preach it shall find his words true and faithful, and he will prosper them in their despised but glorious office.

In the latter part of this last parable our Saviour describes another brother, who at hearing the joy of his father's house because of the returning of the prodigal, instead of being glad with them, murmured and was angry with his father, and would not go in, but pleaded his obedient behaviour, and complained that he had never so much as received a kid to make merry with his friends; but when this man was come, who had spent his substance with harlots, the fatted calf was killed, and all the house filled with music and dancing; and he was offended, and would not enter the house till his father came out and entreated him. There is no envy or emulation among the angels and sons of God in heaven, because a sinner is converted; but among some of his people upon earth it may be found, and some who have seen the happiness of souls snatched as it were out of the burning, and made glad in the Lord's salvation, have been moved with self-righteous risings: they can think, I am sure I have lived a very strict and obedient life, and never run to that excess of sin with these, and yet I never experienced this joy and transport, nor have I felt this love and happiness they speak of; and such murmur.

They

They have in the heart somewhat of the same which our Saviour mentions in another parable, wherein some, who laboured through the heat and burden of the day murmured against the good man of the house, because he had given others, who had only been called into the vineyard in the last hour of the day, the same with them, and had even paid the last first; but our Saviour makes his dealings just, by saying, "Cannot I do what I will with my own?" And in this same parable he makes the father reason with the other brother, till his self-righteousness dies away, and he is convinced of the meetness and justice of his father's dealings with his younger son, and then he comes in. Thus our Saviour would have his self-righteous children learn, that he is a Sovereign, and can do what he will with his mercy and grace, and that there is often more trouble to get one of these into the house, than the publicans and sinners. It was this spirit that ruined the Jews: it made those offended to whom Jesus addresses the latter part of this parable; it hinders many to be saved who stand cavilling and quarrelling with free grace, till they blaspheme and stumble at the stumbling-stone. It makes it difficult to bring home even an awakened soul who unhappily is fallen into this spirit. It is hard for such to go to heaven. But one thing I must observe, the father entreated even his offended and murmuring son to come in; may he do so with all of his mind! may he convince them of his just and true ways, and make them glad to be saved freely themselves, and glad that their dear Saviour will receive sinners! All our own righteousness is caused by ignorance of our state and nature. When Jesus opens the eyes of the most innocent, he is thoroughly convinced he has no real good in him, and is humbly thankful "that this man receiveth sinners." He is not stumbled at the
many

many places where the scripture preaches the justification of the ungodly, of being saved freely, or by faith alone, but he thinks and sings,

How glad am I that thou so loving art,
That thou canst bless my base and worthless heart,
And canst freely bear with my whole behaviour,
O wert thou not exactly such a Saviour,
What should I do !

May we all experience the care of our Good Shepherd, the faithfulness of the Holy Ghost, and the tender love of the Father to our own eternal welfare, and to the honour of the Lamb ; to whom with his Father, and the Holy Ghost, be praise for evermore. Amen.

AN HYMN.

1. I LORD, the prodigal have been,
My substance I have spent in sin ;
I now my youthful follies see,
And, naked, mourn my misery.
2. My innocence, my spotless dress,
I've lost, and all my righteousness ;
Reduc'd and made a stranger here,
Nothing but filthy rags I wear.
3. With men I oft have sought to join,
Would fain have eaten husks with swine ;
But O ! their joys wont do for me,
'Tis empty all, and vanity.

4. For

4. For heavenly bread I pant, I pant!
I know I now begin to want:
None gives my hungry soul to eat,
None pities my forlorn estate.
5. My Father's servants happy are,
While I the sinner perish here:
They have enough, nor scarceness know,
Nor guess what sorrow I go through.
6. I'll rise, and, wretched as I am,
I'll cry to him for whom I came;
Longer my Father shall not be
A stranger to my misery.
7. Behold a sinner, Lord! I'll say,
Thy son, who lately went astray;
Mis'ry and sin is all I plead,
And want of grace and heav'nly bread.
8. See me, though far from thee, and run
To meet thy poor returning son:
And while I tell my wretched case,
Fall on my neck, and me embrace.
9. Bring the best robe, thy righteousness,
And let my feet be shod with peace:
Seal with a ring my trembling hand,
And bring me to my native land.
10. Let all thy children now above,
Rejoice at thy redeeming love;
O tell them, This my son's forgiv'n,
And ransom'd to inherit heav'n.

11. Grant this, my Father, and my tongue
Shall mingle with the blessed throng
With theirs my harp shall sweetly sound,
I once was lost, but now am found !
12. I dead in sin remain'd, till God
Redeem'd my soul from death by blood,
When he for all my guilt was slain ;
And now I am alive again.

DISCOURSE XVIII.

THE SYROPHŒNICIAN: OR, A PATTERN OF INVINCIBLE FAITH.

MATT. XV. 28.

*O woman! great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as
thou wilt.*

THESE gracious words of our Saviour were spoken to a poor woman, a gentile of Canaan, who having found him preaching near Tyre and Sidon, desired him to heal her daughter, who was possessed of an evil spirit; and after some time, when she had met with several repulses from the disciples, and some trials from our Saviour himself, and yet continued her intreaties, Jesus answered her in these words, and sent her away rejoicing.

I look upon the whole history as a most instructing and profitable part of the scripture, and as a pattern of invincible faith; and I think all relations and accounts of this sort are delivered down to us with this view and intent, that we may be stirred up and encouraged thereby to inherit by faith the promises of God, after their example who are gone before, and through their mercy obtain mercy. O may that God, whose mercies endure for ever, make it a blessing to us this day, when it becomes the matter of our consideration, and teach us so to believe in him, that he may also once say to every

every one of us, "Great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt!"

The Evangelist begins the relation of this transaction thus, "Behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." ver. 22.

There is something very moving and worthy of note in all her prayer, and even in the manner in which she uttered it: She cried. Perhaps she saw the multitude round about him, and could not get near, which was the case of many, and yet was so eager to be helped, so needy and distressed, that she could not wait till the congregation was dismissed, and therefore cried out to him. Here one may learn, that when a soul wants the divine help, and is in distress, their best and most simple way is, to cry unto "him who is able to save," namely, Jesus Christ, who saith, "Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden—and I will give you rest for your souls," Matth. xi. 28. It is a bad sign when men can postpone and put off the time of their salvation, with faintly and coldly saying, I hope the Lord will have mercy upon me before I die. Such is not the language of one poor in spirit, nor of the soul that wants a Saviour, for then the captive exile hastens to be delivered, or as David expresses it, "My soul longeth, yea even fainteth; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God," Psalm lxxxiv. 1. And again, "As the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God," Psalm xlii. 1. So in another place he says, "One deep calleth to another:" (that is, the deep of our misery to the deep of his mercy) "Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice!" This is the case with awakened souls; they want deliverance.

They

They hunger and thirst after righteousness, and cannot rest till Jesus hath given them rest. Thus St. Paul, when he was first convinced of his sad estate, and felt (notwithstanding all the righteousness of which he before boasted) that he was a poor miserable sinner, neither ate nor drank for three days, but continued crying out, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" Acts ix. 5. Nor did he cease crying till he had obtained redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of his sins. The same is said of Bartimeus the beggar. He cried for mercy, when he heard Jesus passed by; and when the people forbad him to pray so, he cried so much the more a great deal: and then ye know what followed; Jesus stood still, commanded him to be brought to him, granted his request and blessed him. As long as the poor blind man cried, Jesus could not go forward. His heart is so tenderly affected towards poor sinners, that he cannot leave the poor when he crieth, the needy, and him that has no helper; but properly and strictly is the friend of sinners.

We have many instances in the scripture of his immediately helping such as applied to him with tears and cries, such as the poor leper, Mary Magdalene, Peter, &c. and by these we are taught to cry to the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world; for let who will oppose, he is the person that hears prayer. "On his name whosoever calls shall be saved," Rom. x. 13. compare Acts iv. 12.

Thus, then, the woman cried to him (the words of the prayer were) "Have mercy upon me, O Lord!" First, the inspired writers tell us she was a heathen, a Gentile, and then describe her as calling to Jesus the Lord. How can this be? It is unlikely she had read the prophets, or expected a

Messiah whose name should be Immanuel; and had she believed this, she could no longer have been reckoned among the Gentiles, but rather among the proselytes.

But the truth is, she, no doubt, had heard what a prophet, mighty in word and deed, was risen in Israel. How he healed the sick, raised the dead, cured the lepers, dispossessed demons, and helped all who were possessed of the devil, &c. And like as in all ages, God blesses the preaching of Jesus Christ, with the witness of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men, so then did the Lord certainly bless the report of Jesus to the poor woman, by the same Spirit, and taught her who this Prophet was, wherefore she calls him Lord. "No man can call Jesus the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." And this must be allowed, that it is an eternal blessing to a soul to know Jesus, or else, how can it pray to him, or believe in him? It would not be right to call upon him, or worship him, or expect to be saved by him, if he was not God over all blessed for ever. "If thou knewest who it is that speaketh with thee," said our Saviour to the woman of Samaria, "thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water," John iv. 10. Thus the foundation of our praying to Jesus, and calling upon his name, is the believing that he is truly and eternally Lord and God. This was the ancient way of praying, and what has never failed. "In his name shall they glory; in his name shall they put their trust. They shall call upon his name and be saved. Prayer shall be made daily to him. To him shall all flesh come. Every knee shall bow to him, and every tongue confess that he is the Lord."

The subject of the woman's petition was mercy. "Have mercy upon me, O Lord!" The knowledge

knowledge of our great want of mercy, has brought many thousands to the kingdom of heaven. A sense of their poor lost estate, their corrupt and spoiled heart, their degenerate nature, the guilt of sin, and a mispent life; the fear of death, the dreadful looking for of judgment, the restless condition and uneasy state of soul, makes them long with insatiable longing for mercy. No words suit so well with a soul thus truly awakened as these, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord!" And it is to me a good sign, where a sinner cannot rest until he has obtained mercy.

But, I confess, it does not seem to be such a sense of sin which I have been speaking of, which made this woman call upon the name of our Saviour. It seems as if she had been a poor woman (perhaps a widow) who had one daughter, and she was grievously vexed, or possessed of a devil; and hearing what wonders Jesus had wrought in healing the disease, she also comes to him and begs for her child. It was downright trouble that brought her to Christ. Perhaps she had no sense of her spiritual wants, but thought if her little daughter was but well, that was all she wanted to make her life happy. Therefore the purport of her prayer was, Lord! I am a poor woman whose daughter is possessed; on her account I have no comfort. My dear child, that should have been a joy to me in my old years and disconsolate condition, is rather a burden, and my life is bitter to me, on this account; have mercy upon me, and cure her. Thou hast had mercy upon very many all round about, my neighbours tell me of thy wonders and cures, "Thou Son of David, help me!" This last part of her prayer, wherein she calls our Saviour the Son of David, seems to imply so much: O Lord, who hast humbled
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thyself to be man, and to feel the infirmities of our nature, that thou mightest sympathize with souls in distress and pity them, think only what an uncomfortable life I have, and pity me. Indeed her case was pitiable, and she was an object of compassion, but for all that Jesus answered her not a word. This is the only place in all the Bible where a poor soul in distress came, or cried to the Lord, and he answered not a word. It is so unlike our Saviour's behaviour, that at first sight we must be amazed and surprised above measure till we have seen the end of the Lord's silence, which was the effect of his tender mercy. For had our Saviour said to her, Go thy way, thy daughter is made whole, perhaps she had returned to the house thankful and glad, but asked nothing farther of him, and might indeed have been outwardly helped, but perished for ever in her sins; and therefore our Saviour intended somewhat better for her according to his usual grace, since his outward miracles were often attended with the gift of eternal life and forgiveness of sins; as in the case of the man sick of the palsy, and many others. I had observed before, that all she wanted of our Saviour, seemed nothing more than her daughter's deliverance and recovery, and therefore Jesus answered her not a word. I wonder she did not cease praying, and go home heavy and discouraged: I dare say, if many of us had been treated so, we had certainly thought there is no help for us in our God. But then learn hence, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Be not weary if immediately ye do not receive from him what ye ask; often we do not know what we ask; we do not feel truly our want of salvation; we do not thirst for him, and are not as if we were ready to perish without him; for

for he is a present help in the time of trouble, and is certainly nigh to all that call upon him. When a soul but begins to feel his wants, it is no wonder if our Saviour does not immediately answer. He knows it is best for us and safest, when we experience and feel how deeply our hearts are spoiled and corrupted, that nothing but God can save us: and when it comes so far with an awakened conscience, he is not far from the kingdom of God: he shall find, that though our Redeemer may have seemed to hide away his face for a little moment in displeasure, yet with everlasting kindness he will remember him, and end the days of his mourning, and wipe the tears from his eyes. If any therefore think, This is my case; I cry, but none hears; I am afraid Jesus will not answer me a word. Let me intreat such not to indulge unbelief: our Saviour has no pleasure in your smart or pain, but it is wholesome and good for you; you will learn thereby the need you have of a Saviour, and know a little of that estate and torment from whence his painful death and sufferings have saved you to eternity. Learn then of the woman in the text, to follow Jesus with faith, and cry after him.

But now she meets with another discouragement, "his disciples came and besought him to put her away; for they said she crieth after us." By this we may see she kept on crying, and was resolved not to go away till she had got her answer. So it was with Jacob when he wrestled with the Lord in the plains: he said, "I will not let thee go till thou hast blessed me," and accordingly prevailed and got the blessing. So it is with all those who take the kingdom of heaven by violence; and those that are thus violent, those that cannot and will not rest without salvation, shall surely find it. Woe be to

them who slightly heal their wounds, who cry peace when there is no peace; who content themselves because men call them good people, or because they go to church or meeting often, and attend the duties of their religion, and come no farther. These are they of whom our Saviour says, "Thou hast a name to live, but thou art dead." I wish this may not be the case of many who appear to have no great concern farther than to enjoy their health, to be prospered in the world, and to live easy, and whose hearts never knew the want of God's redemption. "O that such people knew once their danger, they would imitate this woman, they would go out and cry after him, and not rest till he had shewn them mercy!

I had observed that the disciples were for sending her away; and I know some think they meant, Lord, give her what she wants, and send her away? But I rather believe they were offended, and thought she is a heathen, and as they did not know Jesus was come to be their Saviour, but thought the family of Israel only was elected out of all nations, and the rest reprobated, therefore they besought him to send her away; and I do not doubt would have been pleased if their Master had said to her, Get thee hence to the gods of the land, and let them help thee; thou hast despised the God of Israel, he also has despised thee. Thou hast no right to the blessing of Jacob, depart from me. But Jesus could not do so; he loved both Jews and Gentiles, and was not willing either should perish, but have eternal life.

However, it was enough to damp all her hopes of mercy, when his own disciples besought him to send her away; but her great thirst for mercy made her press on yet, till Jesus himself made her an answer. My dear friends, I mean ye who
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are apt to be discouraged, learn hence, that though the children of God, the disciples and followers of Christ, should seem to be against you and slight you, that therefore, and alone on that account, you should not faint; their master is more merciful than they; and even those are saved by him, who are often despised by their own mother's children: Be of good comfort then till he answers: and resolve to lie at his feet, and if you perish, perish there.

“ Who down at Jesu's feet resolves to lie,
Jesus has sworn that soul shall never die.”

And now Jesus answered, but to the woman it must have been a cutting and painful answer, “ I am not sent, says he, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” I dare say every joint trembled in her. Methinks I see the poor heart look quite dejected and troubled, not knowing what to reply for very grief; but the scripture says, she fell down before him. I should have thought indeed, that she would have turned away displeased, or angry, or in despair, for she must have took it for an absolute answer: and had she reasoned much about the matter, she would have been confirmed in it, that his not answering a word, and the beseeching of his disciples that he would send her away, were plain proofs that he did not love her, and had no mind to shew her mercy; but the Holy Ghost had done much in her heart; for though she could think, I am not of Israel, I am one of the daughters of the uncircumcised, and might have made some melancholy reflections on that head, yet it all served to awaken her the more, to see her soul's estate; for she, no doubt, thought, if it be true that he is the Lord, who is come to save his people from

from their sins, if he is the Messiah, for whose mercy all the tribes are waiting, and he is sent to none but the lost sheep of the house of Israel; then what will become of me? And thenceforward we hear her no more name her daughter, but she falls down and worships him, saying, "Lord! help me!" As if she had said, Lord, what then shall I do? If thou art only sent to Israel, then I am afraid I shall perish for ever! O Lord help me! But she might think more properly thus, though I am a lost sheep, and though I am not of the house of Israel, he can make me an Israelite indeed, and therefore in the most humble manner, she fell down at his feet and worshipped him. This is a plain and evident proof she believed him to be the Lord; and besides, she believed he could help her, and therefore it was a short but a comprehensive and pretty prayer, "Lord, help me!" As if she would have said, Lord, I came hither on account of my daughter, but I have found I want thee more than her, help me! make me a child of God, a true Israelite. Have mercy upon me!

But our Saviour answers again strangely, "It is not fit to take the children's bread and give it to the dogs." This was the manner in which the Jews treated the Gentiles, and perhaps looked upon them as dogs in the worst sense, namely, such as were not to be reckoned among the flock of the good Shepherd, but such as were without, and who might not and could not enter the fold. But this sounded hard from the mouth of the Saviour of the world, yet we find it had its good end and effect; for the woman did not fall into a rage, and ask in an angry manner, why does he call me dog? If I am the child of a rejected and forsaken people, how can I help it? If it has been my hard lot to be born of uncircumcised parents, and to be educated an heathen, why does he blame

blame me? Can I alter the decree of the Creator, or change my state or nature? No, this was not her reply: If she had not been too deeply convinced of her sin, and wanted so earnestly a Saviour, she might have reasoned thus; but she knew no dogs had ever lived so unclean and bad a life as she had done; she knew she was worse than a dog, and, as David confessed, "I am even like a beast before thee," so she owns, "It is truth, Lord!" As if she had said, I am a vile, nasty, polluted and defiled sinner; but dogs lick up the crumbs which fall from their Master's table; let me only enjoy the least of thy mercies, what thy own people Israel slight and disesteem: O give me but the crumbs which fall, as it were, from their table! And again she said, "Lord, help me." Now Jesus could stand out no longer; he said to her, "O woman! great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt!" It was as if he had said, Ask any thing, and it shall be done; thy daughter shall be made whole: thy sins be forgiven thee: thou shalt be henceforth of the flock and family of the true Israel; thy name shall be written in heaven; thy place shall be for ever there: "Great is thy faith! be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

It is said she worshipped him before, but now I suppose, she adored with double respect and reverence, and was ready, like Magdalen, to wash his feet with her tears. I dare say she could not tell how to express herself with joy; for so it always is when one has found salvation.

* It would not be amiss to observe again, that trouble first brought her to the Lord. Had she met with no uncommon trial in the world, she had probably gone on like others, without ever thinking who or what the Redeemer was! or, it may be, have despised him with the multitude and perished. Before the end was therefore known, it appeared to be a heavy

heavy judgment that had befallen her, that her daughter, and perhaps her only child, was so visited; but though it might have given her no small concern and pain, she can now say with the sweet singer of Israel, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; for before I was afflicted I went wrong, but now I have kept thy word." She is not the only one whom crosses, troubles and disappointments in the world have served as a means to bring them to Jesus Christ. Many have thus been surrounded on every side, and their way hedged up, as it were, with thorns, that they might cry to God in their trouble, and be delivered out of all their distress. It is sometimes necessary that the Lord should serve us as he served Job, and let Satan touch all that we have, that we may learn to have our treasure in heaven, and lay hold on eternal life. Many have lost all that they have had, been forsaken of friends, destitute, persecuted, slighted and despised, inured to disappointments and afflictions, so that their lives have been often bitter. They have been poor and diseased like Lazarus, but, after all, were carried by angels into Abraham's bosom, who else might have perished had they been beloved and prospered in the world; and after a gay and sensual life ended, after all their honour, glory, fulness, and their easy time was come to a period, and they ready to be dissolved, might possibly have heard, like Dives, "Remember in thy life-time thou hadst thy good things!" O may this never be the case of one who hears me this day! May our dear and wise Lord lay upon us what he will, and disappoint and cross us as he pleases. May we rather live the most troubled and grievous life, and enjoy peace with him in our hearts, and have the assurance of our part in the world to come, than be ever so free and uninterrupted in all riches, honours, and pleasures, and
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lose eternal happiness. Look upon the woman of Canaan, she was once a poor unhappy creature, a woman like Hannah, of a sorrowful spirit, and acquainted with grief. She was once in tears and prayers at the feet of our Saviour, when every thing seemed to make against her. But where is she now? Yonder, she adores before the same feet of God her Saviour in eternal life! She now thanks him for all that happened to her; she now sees his tender mercies through all he suffered to come upon her, and worships before that gracious and good Lamb of God, who came to seek and save that which was lost, and to be a friend of the friendless, the husband of the widow, and a refuge and sanctuary for all ready to perish and oppressed of the devil.

Be not then confused and unhappy about it, ye dear people, if you should meet with many trials, if it should appear as if you were singled out to endure hardships or distress, still speak to our Saviour and say, "Have mercy upon me!" If a sense of your sin bows you down and dejects you, still pray, "Have mercy upon me!" If you can't say many words, if you can't speak much, remember it was the case of the woman before us: Her prayer was very short, but it reached the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. It was only, "Lord, help me!" but it prevailed, because it came out of the heart. Our Saviour is not cheated with long prayers, nor must we think, like the heathen, that we are heard for our much speaking. Our God looks upon the heart; and all the churches shall know he judges according to the heart, and not according to our words: Lift up therefore the heart to the Lord; let your tears and sighs speak the unutterable language of your breast. Do not want to say much, nor study fine words, and dead and dry forms to bring before him, it is like offering the lame and blind upon his altar; appear a poor sinner,

sinner, just as thou art ; come a poor diseased soul to be healed, a sick soul to be cured, a trembling and afflicted creature that wants a rest for thy soul, and he will receive thee. If at first thou dost not seem to succeed, do not let thy faith fail, it is his custom to try the children of men. Thus Joseph tried his brethren, and seemed to answer roughly, till their tears and sighs overcame him, and he could not contain any longer, and then he ordered all the Egyptians to withdraw, and burst out into tears himself, and fell upon their necks and kissed them, saying, " I am Joseph," and then all their sorrows and troubles ended in joy and comfort. So our Saviour dealt with the two disciples travelling to Emmaus ; at first he blamed them for their incredulity, and being slow of heart to believe ; but in a very little while shewed them his hands, and then were the disciples glad : So he used this woman, as if he had no mind to help her, but see only what she found after so many repulses ; her faith bore her up ; she believed him to be the Lord ; she knew he could help her ; she knew none else could do it, and was resolved not to leave him. Do thou likewise, till he falls upon thy neck and says, I am Jesus ; till he shews thee his hands and thy new name graven there ; till he says, " O Man ! O Woman ! Great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Before I conclude this discourse I must observe, that her faith was what pleased our dear Saviour so much ; and for this, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Enoch, David, Gideon, Sampson, and all the Saints are praised in the Scriptures ; and we meet with many places of this sort, " Thy faith hath saved thee," Luke vii. 50. " Thy faith hath made thee whole," Luke viii. 48. " If thou believest, thou shalt see the Glory of God," John xi. 40.

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These and many of the same nature and strain, confirm to us that blessed doctrine that we are justified and saved through faith, and not by means of our works or deserving. Whenever men suppose our duties, obedience, merits, or good works, are the cause of our salvation, they reject the Head Stone in the corner, and without a foundation build the house upon the sand. * The sole cause, reason, and author of our salvation is Jesus Christ. He himself saves us, and by faith we receive in him all we want in time and in eternity. Is our faith little in him? We shall receive little, yea little ~~else~~ beside death and hell; and feel to our hurt that we have despised the blood of the covenant, and thought little of God's salvation. Is our faith great in him? We shall receive much at his hands. "Great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

We cannot believe too highly of Jesus: We cannot think him more gracious or loving than he is: There is more in him than we can ask or think: He is Almighty God, who has left all in heaven, and in the bosom of his Father, and came down with no other view or design but to redeem lost souls out of the slavery and service of Satan, and to open a way for them by his own blood, into the holiest place of all, even heaven itself, whither he is now entered to prepare a place for us. There was no other remedy, he knew nothing we could do was sufficient to atone for our sins, or make up the breach, therefore he said, "Lo! I come," and has now in his own body made satisfaction to divine justice: He has obtained the right of eternal redemption, and can give it to whom he will. If thou art not of the seed or selected ones of Israel, yet he can save thee. There is not a single soul out of the reach of his mercy. He is Lord of all: He is Lord of the living and of the dead. His hand

is not cramped or shortened that it cannot save, or his ear heavy that it cannot hear; and when it has gone so far, that to all human appearance there is no hope, all things are possible with him; venture then and pray to him, be your case what it will, Lord, help me! Fix your eyes upon his cross. Trust only and entirely, body and soul, upon that crucified God, and worship before his feet, which once burned with anguish, and were red like brass in the furnace; to him say, "Have mercy upon me!" He has felt your need, and knows how to shew mercy. When no eye pitied us in our fallen estate, or had compassion on us, he saw us in our blood, cast out to the loathing of our persons, and polluted, and had mercy on us. His heart was touched at our fall and loss, and undertook to be our Saviour. Let nothing then take away your confidence in his great and boundless mercy; but let what will try you, yet believe in him, and you shall see the end of the Lord's dealings shall be, to be gracious, merciful, long-suffering and of great goodness. Let your faith in him only be great, and it shall be done to you even as you will. You shall find the same loving Redeemer, who dealt thus bountifully with an outcast woman of the Gentiles, still rich in mercy to all them that call upon him in faith.

Let us pray the Holy Ghost to grant us such a deep, and continual sense of our great poverty and need of redemption, and the Redeemer, that till our last moments that may be our inmost heart's prayer, "Have pity upon me! Have mercy upon me! Lord, help me!" And may our compassionate high-priest, indeed, have mercy upon us and help us now in this present life, as long as we are strangers and pilgrims in the world; in our last hour, when our strength fails us, and we must go into eternity; and also in the day of judgment, when heaven and earth shall flee

flee before him, and he shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory and judge all nations! Yea then, Lord, especially help us and have mercy upon us, for thy name's sake. In that day, let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in thee.

DISCOURSE XIX.

THE SHADOWS OF CHRIST.

COL. ii. 17.

Which things are a shadow, but the body is of Christ.

IN most of St. Paul's epistles he labours to prove that all the scriptures testify of Christ. That he is the Lord and God so often spoken of therein ; and that the whole law, the sacrifices, the sprinkling of blood, the priest, the vestments, the festivals, the new moons, the Sabbaths, the ark, the temple, and whatever was contained in the first covenant, were not the substance, but only figures of the true, namely, Jesus Christ, in whom is found all fulness.

In like manner, before the law, God spake to the fathers in similitudes, and under types and shadows manifested his redemption to them, and but to a very few was the salvation shewn plainly, and without a veil.

In former ages, therefore, compared with these days of the Son of man, Christ was preached but darkly, and the good people of those times were shut up under the law to the faith which was afterwards revealed, and taught plainly in our Saviour, and by all his apostles and disciples.

I suppose much of God's dealings with Adam, Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is therefore handed down, through so many ages, as shadows

dows of his gracious dealings to us in Christ ; and especially the offerings (which were most early of all others, and used two thousand years before Moses) kept up in the minds of the people, the idea of being saved by the death of another, and made clean by blood. This the ordinances and dispensation of the law only explained a little more, and pointed out clearer the Antitype Jesus. This is plain from the Scripture ; for when Moses was in the mount with God, he saw how the serpent's head should be bruised, and sin and death abolished ; and therefore, when he was ordered to make the worldly tabernacle, and regulate the sacrifices, priesthood, and divine service, he was charged to do it after the pattern which was shewn him ; and thence it is, that to force a strict observance of the rites and ceremonies then in use, Moses delivers the ordinances and statutes, saying, Thus and thus shall it be done ; and adds, " All these words the Lord commanded Moses." This served to enlighten a little such as walked under that cloudy dispensation, and those who searched diligently among the prophets, and who ventured behind the veil, found out that God would provide a lamb, and make his soul an offering for sin, and by his stripes heal the heart of his people, and in his blood, like a fountain, wash away the sins and uncleanness of the world, and therefore boldly testified of him, and taught the people of the coming of a priest who should abide for ever, and who was mighty to save. They mentioned the bringing in of a law and new covenant, that could give life and salvation, and which should be everlasting ; and the shedding of blood, which could make an atonement for the soul. By this means many died in faith, having only seen the Saviour afar off, having wished to see the days that we

see, but did not see them ; and to hear the words that we hear, but did not hear them.

However many, professing christianity now, are ashamed of it, yet it is most sure and certain, that the Lord, so often named and mentioned in the Bible, the Jehovah, the God of the prophets and fathers, the Maker of heaven and earth, the One God, the Holy one of Israel, is no other than the same Person, who having often appeared to the patriarchs, and to the church in the wilderness, as a great King, as an Angel, as a cherub, in fire, in a cloud, &c. in these last days appeared in the form of a servant, and was called Jesus Christ ; and though men will venture to think low and meanly of him, and suppose some being or name greater or higher than he, they must one day bow the knee to him with shame, and know, that there is no name above his name in heaven and earth, or under the earth, nor in this world, nor in that which is to come. He is truly low, in respect of his humanity, for in that he humbled himself, but is nevertheless truly and everlastingly “ God over all blessed for ever. Amen.”

Some of the first shadows of Christ appear even directly after the fall ; for as soon as Adam and Eve had sinned, and were sensible of it, they endeavoured to hide themselves behind the trees, and made aprons of fig-leaves to cover their nakedness. It was indeed a poor robe, and what the least wind could have blown away, and the least finger have torn, but such is all the righteousness of our making ; it may serve to please ourselves, and such short-sighted people as are in the same state with us, but the smallest blast of the Lord's mouth would make it all flee away like a cobweb, or chaff, or smoke out of the chimney, and we should be left naked and bare. Therefore when God forgave Adam,

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Adam, and comforted him with the promise of healing the breach by the Seed of the woman, he no doubt taught him to offer sacrifices, and so preached to his family and children, that by means of death and shedding of blood the sinner should be saved; and then the Lord made them coats of the skins of the beasts, and cloathed them. It is not said, he taught them how to make their coats, but made them himself; signifying that no covering we can make ourselves will hide our shame from him, or be right in his sight: He must do it himself; he must cloath us with his righteousness as with a raiment, and woe be to them that cover not themselves with the covering of his Spirit. We are so far from being capable of covering our sin, or making ourselves righteous, that we even cannot help to do it. As it was said of the altar, "Thou shalt make it of whole stones, thou shalt not lift up a tool upon it, if thou lift up thy tool upon it thou hast polluted it;" so may it be said in this respect, thou must have it wholly of him, a perfect righteousness, long and down to the foot, quite complete, and fit to hide all iniquity, and having no room to add any of our own to it. To think of obtaining part of this to make ours entire, would be to take the new cloth to mend the old garment, which may not be. As the fleece of the victim offered in sacrifice was Adam's coat, so Christ being stripped naked, and offered up on the altar of the Cross, takes his true fleece, his righteousness, of which he seemed divested when he was made sin for us, and numbered with transgressors, and this he gives and imputes to cover their nakedness for whom he was made a sacrifice. "Buy of me," he saith, "raiment, and ye shall be cloathed, and the shame of your nakedness shall not appear."

Thus Noah's ark was a shadow of Christ; for when the fountains of the great deep were broken up,

up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and every living creature died in the storm and flood, a sanctuary was prepared for such as believed, where they were safe; and when a dove ventured out of the ark, she could find no rest for the sole of her foot till Noah took her in again: So in the midst of a world, where Satan's seat is, where dangers are on every side, where, by and by, hell from beneath shall open her mouth, and the wrath of God fall and burn up all the world, and put the nations of the earth in the greatest distress, Jesus is an Ark of refuge; whoever gets in there shall be safe; let the storm come when it will, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against them; his wounds are the open way by which we escape, and a soul once entered in by him, shall be secure in eternity. Have any been so foolish to leave him and go again into the world? I know they can have no rest for the sole of their foot; they may wander to and fro, like the dove, but must return to the ark, and our heavenly Noah will put forth his hand and take them in, till the storm be over-past.

The sparing of Isaac, and offering a lamb in the stead upon mount Moriah, was also a shadow of Christ's dying as a Lamb in our stead. Abraham had prepared the altar, the wood, and the knife, and Isaac was bound and laid thereon, and his father's hand was stretched out to sacrifice him, when an angel interposed, and shewed him a ram caught in the thicket, which he took and offered up in his room, and Isaac was unbound and saved alive. By this the Holy Ghost sets forth our state; the altar was prepared, as it were; our sins were like fuel ready to have burned us up, and would have brought on the wrath of God like a river of flaming brimstone to kindle it; the sword was lifted and held out, we, sinners, bound down by Satan with the

the chains of our own sins, when Jesus, like a lamb, caught in the thicket, cried, Forgive them, my Father, and unbound and forgave us, stretched out his hands upon the altar, and was fastened thereon with nails, when the sword awaked upon him, and he expired loaded with our sins, and in our stead died, so making an atonement.

When Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire, a cave in Zoar was found for Lot and his children, and this also was a shadow of Christ: For when guilty souls are warned to flee from wrath to come, when they leave the world, which John calls spiritual Sodom and Egypt, and under a sense of their own sin tremble, and do not know where to escape, the Holy Spirit shews them the wounds of Jesus; his arms extended and held out, like the wings of a hen, are a happy shelter in such a time of need. That smitten and cleft body of his is then like the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land, a hiding place in the stormy wind and tempest." "Is it not a little one?" says Lot of Zoar, "and my soul shall live." So we who believe in Jesus sing with understanding,

Ye gaping bloody wounds, to me
How dear are ye and sweet?
In you I've found for evermore
A small but safe retreat.

The manner in which Isaac blessed his son Jacob must also be observed as typical; for he intended to have blessed Esau, and sent him out to fetch venison, that he might once more eat of his son's labour, and impart his blessing to him before he died: In the mean time Rebecca, the mother of Jacob, got ready meat for her husband, and made her son Jacob carry it to him in the name of Esau,

and lest he should handle him (for Esau was an hairy man) she put the skin of the kid which she had killed about his hands and about his neck, and sent him to his father, who though he was old, and his eyes so dim that he could not see, yet when Jacob spoke, he questioned his voice, and though he felt his hands, and knew they felt like Esau's hands, yet he was not reconciled to his voice, because, saith he, "it is the voice of Jacob," till as he stood near his father, he smelt the raiment of his elder son upon him, and that overcame the good old man! O! he cried, "it is Esau, the smell of my son's raiment is as the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed," and then he blessed his son in the name of his father's God, with all the blessings he could wish his son, yea, and he adds, "he shall be blessed."

Thus when Jerusalem, our mother, invites us by the gospel to venture into the presence of our heavenly Father, and get his blessing, a poor sinner may easily be afraid, like Jacob, lest he should meet with a curse and not a blessing; for he may think, my Father knows my voice would be the voice of Jacob, the voice of a lost and ruined sinner, whose best sighs and tears, and prayers have so much sin mingled in them, that in justice I might expect wrath rather than a blessing at his hands. This is true, but do as Jacob, put on thy elder brother's raiment, put on the righteousness of Christ, and thou shalt be blessed with all the blessings in heaven above, and in the earth beneath, yea, and thou shalt be blessed. With all Jacob could have done, he had certainly failed, had he not put on Esau's raiment, for this was the only means of his prevailing. Do all thou canst, imitate the voice of a saint, speak like an angel, and put on the most strict, holy, and devout form, and God will behold thee afar off. Thou wilt be treated as a hypocrite, and
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be scattered in the imagination of thy own heart, but put on the Lord Jesus ; just as he stood in thy sins before the judges, so stand thou in his righteousness, and God shall call thee fair ; his blood and obedience makes such a happy alteration, that whoever puts on this raiment, and are invested with this robe, may stand bold before the throne, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, and all the blessings God the Father has, all the blessings God the Holy Ghost bestows, and all the blessings God the Son purchased for them, shall come upon them in time and in eternity.

The Paschal lamb was still a brighter emblem of Christ our Passover, and more lively pointed out the deliverance through his blood.

This was an ordinance appointed the last night the children of Israel were in Egypt, and at the same time that the first-born were slain. They were ordered to take a lamb of the first year, without blemish or spot, and to roast the flesh, and eat it with bitter herbs, leaning upon their staves, and to sprinkle the blood of it upon their door-posts, which was to be a sign to the destroying angel as he passed by at midnight, to spare that house. They were to eat it with bitter herbs, to remember their cruel bondage in Egypt ; and to lean on their staves, to put them in mind they were strangers, and on a journey. Accordingly at midnight the angel passed through the land, and slew the eldest person in every house, but only where the blood was upon the door, there all was safe and preserved.

When Jesus saw our affliction under the iron yoke of Satan, and pitied the lost world, and was come down to save it, he became our passover. He was of the first year, that is, innocent, and pure as a virgin, born of a virgin. " He was without blemish and without spot, no iniquity was found in him,

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nor was any guile in his mouth." Such a lamb God prepared, and that night when he opened the way for our deliverance, he was roasted, as it were, and scorched up with burning anguish and the fiery wrath of God, so that "his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth, and his moisture was like the drought in summer," while his feet looked red with heat and pain, and like brass, burning in the furnace. In this condition he died, and poured out his blood upon the ground; and this was done on that very day wherein the Jews from year to year killed their paschal lambs.

All who would escape in the day of judgment, keep his passover; for the destroying angels, each with his destroying weapon in his hand, now watch only for the word, and in one night they would smite according to their charge, small and great, old and young, maids, women, and little children; but for the present they forbear, as well as those who have power over the winds, that they may not hurt the earth or any green tree, till Jesus has marked his people, and sprinkled the blood of the true Passover. We here eat his flesh by true faith, to the saving of our souls; it becomes meat indeed, and is the fore-taste of the marriage-supper of the Lamb; but we eat it with bitter herbs, namely, we meet with many bitter trials and troubles in this spiritual Egypt from the world, the devil, and those round about us: We eat it leaning on our staves; for though we may be happy and at peace about our soul's future estate, yet we may not forget that we are not at home; the times of refreshing we have here in this life from the presence of the Lord, are only like a traveller baiting at an inn; he forgets not he is upon a journey, and hastens on; so we have our eye upon the continuing city, the New Jerusalem, and are here pilgrims and foreigners, and therefore

therefore in our best comforts, in our most happy and convenient places, we remember that we are yet in the days of our pilgrimage, and following our Saviour out of the camp, and this mind continues till we lay down our staves, and finish our journey at the rest where we would be. Again, the blood of sprinkling is upon our door-posts, we are sealed thereby to the day of redemption, and are safe. It is the mark, let the destroying angel pass by when he will, let the tempest of the last day rise suddenly or slowly, he must not touch one come to the blood of sprinkling. "Come not near any one, saith the Lord, on whom is my mark." Happy are the people who are in such a case!

The journey of the Israelites to Canaan affords us shadows of this kind, noble and many. First, the presence of the Lord went before the camp till the enemy pursued them, and then moved behind and was a barrier between the two hosts, till his flock was landed on the other side; for ~~thus~~ Jesus goes before his children and they follow him, and look to him, being led as a flock by their shepherd; but when any danger is nigh he always is between us and it, and promises "no harm shall happen unto thee, neither shall any evil come near thy dwelling," till we are landed on the shore, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Again, when they stood on this side the Red Sea, they saw how the same waters which saved them, drowned all their enemies. This is also a blessed figure of the blood of Jesus, for the same Red Sea by which they who believe are washed, and by means of which they pass over and enter the good land, destroys and drowns all their sins, that else would have overtaken them, and made them again captive, or pursued them to the bar and accused them. All are like the dead corpses of the Egyptians of which Moses said, "these that

you have seen to-day, ye shall see no more for ever !” All are drowned in the deep of this sea, and shall be remembered no more.

Again, The rock which God struck when the waters gushed out, was another shadow of Christ. The children of Israel had now crossed the deep, as through a wilderness, and were now come into a barren and dry land where was no water. The people and their little ones, their cattle, and what they had with them, were ready to die with thirst, and in this distress they cried to the Lord, and he bid Moses speak to the rock in the sight of the congregation, and smite it with his rod, and as he struck it, the waters flowed out of the flinty stone as out of a springing well ; nor did this happen alone, but the rock followed them, and afforded them plenty of water till they came into a better land. Just so in the midst of this howling wilderness where is no living water, and where else we must have perished, there the Lord Christ was the Rock, and it pleased God to smite him and put him to grief. His wounds were the smitten places whence flowed the rivers of the water of life ; “ Of this whosoever drinketh shall live for ever,” and this Rock follows his children till they enter the true Canaan, and drink it new in the kingdom of God.

In like manner the manna was a shadow of Christ. When they wanted bread the Lord rained it down upon them daily, only on the sabbath, and then it ceased. Our Saviour is the “ true Bread which came from heaven and gives life to the world.” His flesh is the hidden manna, which carnal men know nothing of, but the Holy Spirit gives it those who are seeking the city which has foundations. This is that we pray for in the Lord’s prayer, “ Give us this day our daily bread,” or, as it is properly called, our supersubstantial bread. Those who eat the manna
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in the wilderness are dead, with many of them God was not pleased, wherefore "he sware, they shall not enter my rest;" but whoso eats of this bread shall never die, he shall find it like the bread Elijah eat, in the strength of which he went that long journey to Horeb. So whoso is partaker of the flesh of Christ he shall renew his strength therewith, and endure to the end of his journey and be saved, for it is meat indeed. The Israelites had it rained down daily, to teach them their daily dependance upon their dear Jehovah; so we who believe feed daily upon Christ crucified, and without him we cannot do a day. The language of a faithful heart is, "Give us this day our daily bread." They might not keep of it till the morrow, for then it bred worms and stank, to teach us we may not live upon past experience, but continue to live upon him who has been gracious, and will be so to the end. The manna was small, to teach us not to despise the least glimpse of mercy, and the day of small things, the crumbs that fall from his table. It was sweet, like wafers made with honey, to shew, how precious and sweet Jesus is to a perishing soul. No bread is so sweet to a starving man, as the torn and broken body of Christ, to one hungering after righteousness; it is sweeter than honey or the honey-comb. On the sabbath it rained not down, to teach us, in one eternal sabbath we shall need the manna no more so rained down upon us, we shall then see his face, and sit down with him at his table, and go no more out.

The brazen serpent which Moses lifted up was another shadow of Christ. The congregation in their journey came into a land where were fiery serpent-innumerable, and they were destroyed of serpents till God contrived this remedy. Moses made an image of the thing that had bitten and stung the people, and raised it high in the camp, that all the most

distant of the people could see it, and it came to pass when they were stung, if they despised the cure and means of healing they died without mercy, but whoever looked to the serpent was healed. So was the Son of man lifted up: He knew we were in the land of this wilderness, where sins were like fiery serpents and innumerable, and the poison he foresaw would corrupt and ruin for ever body and soul, therefore was he made in the likeness of that which tormented and stung our consciences, namely, sin, as it is written, "He was made sin for us," and thus hung the Holy One of God upon the cross, twisting and twining like a wounded serpent, that all stung and hurt by sin might look to him and be saved. Whoever despises the simple and mean cure, and will sooner trust what he has procured by art, study and pains on his own works and righteousness, rather than the free mercy vouchsafed by looking and believing in him slain for us, such an one dies without mercy, his blood is upon his own head. Our Saviour was exhibited to him, but he would not be healed; but where a poor distressed and pained sinner feels the sting of the serpent, which is sin, and wants ease with all his heart, and sighs for salvation, such an one the Holy Ghost directs to look upon Jesus, and behold his sufferings and tears, to look into his wounds and stripes, and see his sorrow which has been more than any sorrow, and here he gets healing. The pain of sin dies away, the anguish ceases, and the tortures and pangs of a dying Jesus put an eternal end to his own. "Look unto him and be saved all ye ends of the earth!"

The ark was a shadow of Christ; it was overlaid with gold, and contained the tables of the covenant, the rod of Aaron that budded and bore fruit, the golden censer, the pot of manna, the Urim and Thummim, and the glory of God; but all was covered

vered over with a plain coarse covering of goat's hair and badger's skin, so that it would have been easy to have passed it, and not thought so great treasure and such mysteries were laid up there. So also is Christ. In him was all fulness. He is our covenant. "I will give thee, saith God, for a covenant to the people." All the law and the tables of the Old Covenant were not the substance, but a faint shadow of that which God made in Christ, and by which we are his people, and he is our God, and this is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. He is the Golden Censer, in which all our prayers and praises are offered up, and become like sweet odours before the throne, for these odours are the prayers of the saints. He is our true Manna, as I have said. He is that Rod which budded and bore the fruit of the Tree of life. He is the Urim and Thummim, the Light and Perfection, the White Stone of which we learn the mind of the Most High, and whereon are graven our new names.

The altar, the candlestick, the shew-bread, were shadows of him. "We have an altar, saith St. Paul, to which they have no right who serve the tabernacle." As formerly, the altar sanctified the gift, so all that we offer would be abominable and offensive in the eyes of him who can see our iniquity, if the Altar Christ did not sanctify it.

There's nought we can offer which he esteems good,
Unless it ascends in the smoke of the blood.

But whatever we pray or ask is heard on Jesus's account, and for his sake alone. There the poor sinner offers his sighs and tears, and there the happy soul, the king and priest of God, offers his songs of joy, his blessings and praises, and is accepted.

The candlestick was one, but had seven branches which gave light to the whole sanctuary ; so Jesus in the church, with his seven eyes and seven Spirits of God, lightens the temple of God, and the whole church in heaven and earth. He is the Shew-Bread, which none might eat but the priests alone, none but those who are anointed of the Holy Ghost to minister before God, and are priests clothed in white raiment, washed in the blood of the Lamb, may eat of this bread.

The sacrifices were of all others the most lively shadows of Christ. Every morning a lamb was offered, that was for the sins of the night, and every evening another, and that was for the sins of the day ; this was called the daily sacrifice, or morning and evening oblation. Thus day and night a lamb lay bleeding upon God's altar, and the smoke of his burning came up without ceasing before the Lord. Thus Jesus having offered up himself, the "true Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world," ascended to the golden altar in the heavens, where day and night he appears in the presence of God for us, as a Lamb that has been slain, atoning for the sins of every day, and making intercession for his poor people. On the feast day of expiation he was shadowed by a goat, which always represented the wicked, and when the goat on that day was brought into the tabernacle, the high-priest laid his hand on its head, charging thereon all his sins and the sins of the congregation of Israel, so did the other priests, and then while they condemned it to be slain, they took a second goat by the horns and brought it out, and one led it into the wilderness bearing away the iniquity of the congregation of Israel, into a land uninhabited ; mean while the other goat, with a calf or bullock, was made a sin-offering, while all the Levites blew their trumpets,
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and all the people shouted for joy, because now they saw their sin carried away in the scape goat, and atoned for in the sacrifice. This was fully accomplished in the day when Christ was sacrificed, for then first the high-priest charged him with all sins and crimes, the chief priests and elders did the same, to which all the people consented; and after the high priest had said, "It is better that one die and the whole nation perish not," they dragged out the victim black with our guilt and sin, for God laid upon him the iniquity of us all, and he made his death with the wicked; and as he died making an everlasting and perfect atonement for all sin, his Spirit, like the scape goat, entered the state of the dead, as into a wilderness, and carried away all the iniquity of the land in one day. This was the day that the Lord had made, the day of expiation and making an end of sin; and while he destroyed and cancelled transgression, all the priests of God round the throne blew their trumpets, and sung the new song, "Salvation to the Lamb," while all below shouted with barbarous, and all above with divine joy.

The high-priest that officiated yearly among the Jews, and was particular on this day, was also a shadow of our good High-Priest; for he was chosen out from among his brethren, that, being a man like them, he might be merciful and compassionate: Also he was to wash his clothes, to put on his head a golden crown or mitre, with the name of JEHOVAH written thereon, for that he represented God. He was also clad in a white linen ephod which reached down to his knees, over which he had a robe wrought with gold, scarlet, and blue, and on his breast the names of the twelve tribes; and thus dressed he took of the ashes of the heifer, and the blood of bulls and goats, and seven times sprinkled
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towards heaven, and then having sprinkled all the vessels of the ministry, he sprinkled himself, and then entered in behind the veil into the holy of holies, where he made prayers for the whole church, and at his return besprinkled all the people with blood, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has enjoined to you," and this was a sort of sign of absolution.

This also was accomplished in our High-Priest, for first he washed his clothes in a bloody sweat, he wore the white ephod, which was the shadow of righteousness, only with this difference, that he wore it down to the foot, to signify the complete righteousness which he brought in; whereas the righteousness of the law was figured by an ephod which reached only to the knee, to signify the imperfection thereof; for the law was weak and could make nothing perfect. His torn, mangled, and rent body resembled the embroidered robe, and upon his breast he truly bears all his people's names, they are graven on the precious stone of his heart. He only wears indeed the name of JEHOVAH on his crown. He is the LORD, the High-Priest over the whole house of God, yet he was made man, and chosen out of the people a merciful and compassionate High-Priest, having experienced, and undergone, and proved the force and weight of all temptations, sins, and afflictions, that he may pity and help us when we are tempted. And like as the Jewish priest sprinkled the blood seven times toward heaven in making the atonement, so did Jesus, in his scourging, in being crowned with thorns four times, in his hands and feet, and lastly in the opening of his side, and thus has fulfilled all that was written concerning him, in his own body, and "with his own blood he entered the holy place, where he makes intercession for us," while his Spirit ministers

ministers in his name, and brings the deep sense of our being vile dust and ashes to our hearts, (and this was meant by sprinkling ashes on the people) and then reveals the blood of Jesus, saying, "This is the blood of the New Testament which was shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins;" and this is done at that happy moment when a soul obtains pardon, and is justified by looking and believing in Christ.

The new moon festival was a shadow of Christ; for when the new moon appeared, then the people rejoiced, that now their nights would be changed into day, and all would be light; so Jesus becomes our Sun by day and our Moon by night, and our light shall go no more down. This comes to pass when he rises in the heart, and dissipates and chases away the darkness and night of unbelief and heaviness, and we become enlightened by the Day-Spring from on high. We thenceforth no more walk in the night and stumble, but see our way and know whither we go. Our eyes are open, and we see the Sun of righteousness is risen upon us, with healing in his wings: The Lord will be our light and our everlasting brightness.

The sabbath also was a shadow of Christ; for when that commenced, all labour, work, and fatigue ceased, and they rested; so Jesus saith, "Come unto me and I will give you rest for your souls." We then enter the preparation of the eternal sabbath, and cease from all self-workings and stirrings of nature, which have caused such pain and misery to our hearts, and at last it has been but labouring in the fire, and beating the air, and like the disciples who toiled all night and caught nothing. "We have been in pain, we have travailed, saith the prophet, and brought forth wind," so is it with an awakened soul till he has seen the Redeemer

Redeemer in his sufferings and labours. His obedience, and toil, and servitude, satisfy the hungry, and afford a rest to the weary and heavy laden. The moment we look to him in faith, or come to him, we are at home, as it were, we have arrived at our port, we have done with fruitless labours, and strive no more to wash the Ethiopian white, or cleanse the leopard from his spots : We have found at once a cure in the blood of Jesus, that penetrates and pierces to the very root of indwelling sin, drives the old dragon from his seat, and makes the fainting soul free from the bondage of sin and death, and he obtains a sabbath, the antepast of that which shall have no end, and this we have only in Jesus. "We that believe enter into his rest, and his rest is glorious."

The temple was yet another shadow of our Saviour. Thither all the tribes went up to worship God. That was the house that God had chosen wherein his name should be. His presence dwelt there. It was often called his holy habitation, his throne. All prayer must be made there, or looking toward the temple, all sacrifices offered there, and there only was the mercy-seat, and holy of holies : but all this was only in shadow, for the "Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands," as saith the prophet ; but in Jesus is the true temple. More than once our Saviour, speaking of his body, called it the Temple ; and this was the house which the Lord had pitched, and not man, where he would dwell. All the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him. The name of God is upon him, he is verily the Lord and true God. Here is the very mercy-seat, where all find mercy ! Here is the open door, namely, in the veil of his flesh, into the holiest place of all. Here all prayer must be made, and looking to this house,
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turning to this Lamb and Saviour for help, is the only means of obtaining a hearing. "If any have sinned and cannot come, if the enemy have carried them away captive into a strange land, and they cannot worship or pray to thee in this house, but shall turn and make their prayer looking towards this house (said Solomon in his prayer at dedicating the temple) then do thou hear from heaven and forgive." Thus we find Daniel opening his window in the captivity, "and looking toward the holy temple at Jerusalem," when he prayed; and the angel tells him, from the first day he sought the Lord, he was heard. Just so, if a soul has sinned, and Satan has led him captive at his will, into a state far distant from the Lord, so that if he would give all the world he cannot come, he fails and is afraid and ashamed to venture, let him turn and look toward the temple, let him look at Jesus, and see his wounds, and arms, and heart all open to receive him, let him pray with his face toward the crucified Jesus, and he shall feel what reality is in him, he shall know, "He is gracious and merciful, and his compassions fail not."

John says, "I saw no temple in heaven, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple." This is that of which Solomon's was only a picture and figure that is destroyed, and all the worshippers scattered, but this has foundations, and shall be the house of God for ever; whoso enters in hither shall go no more out.

The six cities of refuge and the sanctuary were also other shadows of Christ. His torn head, his back where the plowers plowed and made deep furrows, his hands and feet, are the six cities of refuge, his wounded side is the sanctuary. If you are convinced of your sinful state, are in danger of the wrath of God, and afraid lest the avenger of blood

blood should pursue you, O fly to these cities, there is room enough to harbour the whole world; fly like doves before the storm into the clefts of this rock, and you shall find the best refuge. You have not many miles to journey, you have no long pilgrimage to undertake; you need not travel to Jerusalem, or Medina, or Loretto; Jesus is near to you, his hands are spread out to embrace returning prodigals, they are the horns of the altar, the only refuge of poor guilty sinners.

When Joab fled for sanctuary and took hold on the horns of the altar, he was dragged thence and slain; but no man can pluck you out of Jesus Christ's hands. Whoever have escaped thither are in safety as long as the sun and moon endureth. The remembrance of their sin and past ill life may make them blush for shame, and force tears from their eyes, but no avenger of blood, no Satan, no law, no judgment can drag a soul thence; they shall dwell safely under his shadow, and none shall make them afraid.

In the same manner, Adam, Noah, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, David, &c. in other respects, have been shadows of our Immanuel. As by Adam came death, sin, the curse, and misery upon all born out of his loins, so by Christ came the restoration, righteousness, blessing, happiness, and eternal life, upon all born again of him, and who have received a new birth out of his side, through the Spirit, the water, and the blood.

As Noah prepared the Ark and saved his family, so Jesus has prepared also an ark for the saving his family, and is himself that great salvation.

Like as Isaac also would marry his wife out of a far country, and sent for her with camels, a guard of young men, and fine raiment, jewels, and riches to adorn her, and provision by the way;

way; so Jesus sends down into the world, to invite us to be the bride, the Lamb's wife: he sends many angels to guard and bring us home; his righteousness and merits are the wedding-garment and jewels which make us shine in the marriage-chamber, and his body and blood is our provision in the way.

Moses was a Saviour, and led out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, and from the house of bondage; but Christ was a better Saviour, who saves his people from their sins, and releases them out of the hands of all tyrants, death, hell, and the grave, and will be their Saviour in eternity.

Because of Moses's weakness at the waters he died, and might not enter the good land; he brought them into the wilderness, and there left them; and then Joshua, which is the same name with Jesus, took them and brought them into the land of Canaan over Jordan. Hereby God signified, that the law brings people out, as it were, into a wilderness, and there shews them their sin and cursed estate, and leaves them; there we should have been left for ever, if our true Joshua had not vouchsafed to lead us over Jordan into the good land above; for what the law could not do through the weakness of our flesh, that Jesus does, and not only convinces the soul of sin, but brings grace and truth, reality and substance with him, and at once looses the captive from the condemnation of the law, cancels the bond, and is our Surety and Saviour.

Above all the rest David was his shadow, and that in so eminent a manner, that Christ is often called David in the scripture.

David was a shepherd, and when a lion and a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, he

ventured his life for the lamb, and slew the lion and the bear, and brought back the sheep he had lost. Our good Shepherd saw when the devil like a roaring lion seized his sheep, and though all the heavens were his with all their hosts, and the world, with its numerous inhabitants, were to him, in comparison, like a drop of the bucket, yet for that worthless little drop, that poor sheep, he ventured and lost his life to save it: he made war with the lion and the dragon, and overcame by his blood, and brought back the sheep upon his shoulders, which he had lost. David was also a king, a priest, and a prophet: Jesus is the King of kings, and Prince of the kings of the earth; he is the King of Israel, the Prince of peace, whose kingdom shall have no end. David, indeed, was not of the family of Aaron, nor the first-born of his mother, but was called of God to minister in a white ephod, and to burn sacrifices before the Lord; so Jesus was no Levite, but made a priest by him that swore and will not repent, saying, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech." He only was chosen out of all in heaven and earth to offer the great oblation, and he alone was found worthy to make intercession for the people, and to atone for sin. He also was the "Prophet mighty in word and in deed," and the chief Doctor and Teacher in all his Father's house. His doctrines, his prophecies alone the Holy Ghost uses to awaken, help, and save the lost world. His words are spirit and life. But the time forbids me to add more, for all other blessed men, all the mysteries of the law, all offerings, festivals, sacraments, washings, and laws are shadows of him. He is our Righteousness, Holiness, Wisdom, Redemption, our Head, our Shepherd, our Master, our Elder, our Light, our Truth, our Resurrection, our Sun, our Guide, our
Way

Way to heaven, our Door into the sheepfold, our Saviour, our Maker, our Preserver, Mediator, Advocate, Peace, Rest, and eternal Life; he is our Foundation, our Doctrine, our Glory, our Lord God, and All!

He was once preached in visions, in shadows, and darkly by the law, but now plainly and without a veil; now as the crucified Lamb, as the only One that can save, and cannot be set forth too openly, too distinctly and clearly; for the night is past, and the true light shineth; the winter is over, and the shadows fly away, and he, our Lord Jesus, is set forth as a propitiation for the remission of sins, and is and must be preached alone, by all his ministers, as the "only Saviour, the First and Last, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, without whom we can do nothing." He is our eternal God and Creator, who for our sakes was incarnate and made a man, and is now our Father, Husband, and Brother, our All in all.

Whatever is sacred, or mysterious, or dear, in respect of him, must be esteemed little and invaluable; they are all shadows; but the substance and body is Christ. To whom be glory for ever and ever.

May you all possess him in your hearts! Amen.

DISCOURSE XX.

THE FALL AND REDEMPTION.

1 COR. xv. 47.

The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.

IN this chapter the doctrines of the fall by the first, and the restoration by the second Adam, is treated of in a particular manner, and with divine authority and clearness.

The design of the apostle seems to have been the proving a general resurrection, against such who among the Sadducees, and other captious people, denied it. He sets forth Adam as having by his disobedience introduced death into the world, and Christ as bringing in life, and destroying death. “By one came death; he says, and by one came the resurrection of the dead;” and boldly asserts, that Christ has so undertook the cause, that death, sin, the curse, and whatever came in by original sin, shall be done away and destroyed in him, who will reign till he has subdued all things to himself, and swallowed up death in victory, and brought out of their graves again those who have been turned into corruption, and make all alive, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt.

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My purpose is not now to speak of the resurrection altogether, though that is one of the principles of Christianity, and very comfortable; but of the fall by Adam, and of its sad effects in the world, and of the redemption and restoration by Christ Jesus, and the blessed consequences of his dying, in all who believe.

After God had finished the world, and made it very good, on the sixth day he created, out of the dust of the ground, man in his own image; for, as himself was Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so was his creature his copy and transcript, viz. body, soul, and spirit; for "God breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul." He was made a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and worship, for to him was the world put in subjection, all beasts and birds, and whatsoever walketh in the paths of the seas; all came to him to receive names, and what name he called them that was their name. The earth brought forth abundantly, every tree whose fruit was good for food, and every green herb for his use. All was a blessed garden, and a sort of lower Paradise.

In this happy and angelical situation was Adam when his Creator saw it best for him not to be alone, and therefore caused him to fall into a deep sleep: during which he opened his side, and took a rib or part of him away, and of this he made a woman, whom Adam knew as soon as he awoke, for he said, "Now this is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh;" and though it seems God had called their names Adam, for they were one, yet he called her Chevah, or Eve, because he looked upon her as the mother of all living.

They had not lived long in their innocent and high estate before sin spoiled and ruined all, which

happened thus: Satan, who before had been an angel, and very likely one of the greatest among the principalities in heaven, the first-born son of the morning, for his pride, of which he was the author, in attempting to be like the Most High, was cast down, and his angels with him, into the lower regions; and as it was otherwise out of his power and above his reach to revenge himself on the Lord, he plotted the hurt and ruin of the new world, in which he observed the Creator took such pleasure: this he knew he could never effect but by bringing sin into it, and with this he succeeded. Now, amidst all the liberty granted to Adam, and notwithstanding all his dignity, sovereignty, and dominion, upon the throne God was greater than he; and that he might know it, and live as became a child of God, one only tree was forbidden to be tasted, upon forfeiture of his sonship and divine life. "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Satan took the advantage of this prohibition, and spoke with Eve in the form of a serpent, which was the wisest, if not the most lovely, of all the creatures, about this tree, which is called by the Holy Ghost, "The Tree of Knowledge," because, upon the eating of it, their eyes were opened to their sad misfortune, to know evil. At their first conference they continued child-like, obedient, and simple, but were at last persuaded, at least, to look on it, and see how lovely it appeared, for "it was pleasant to the eye, and good for food;" and as often as they refused to touch it, Satan reasoned with them, and told them, "if they did eat, they would not die;" but God knew that at their eating they would be, like himself, wise, and knowing good and evil, and be like gods, wherefore he had forbidden it. Here, questioning the word of God through Satan's lying,
and

and saying, "Ye shall not surely die," unbelief stole in, and a desire to taste the fruit of which God had said, "Ye shall not eat," and then, first the woman, and after that the man eat, and at once lost their glory and dignity, and by obeying him, became servants of the devil, and sunk into his condemnation. Fear and shame were the immediate effects of their sin, the Holy Spirit also departed, and a curse came upon all the world, and upon every creature, which before God had made in subjection to Adam.

Evil was now in the earth, which just before was very good; venom and poison rushed into some, fury and fierceness into others, and mischief, and somewhat very bad, into all the creatures that had life: The trees and herbs degenerated, and the ground brought forth thorns and noisome weeds. Adam was no more obeyed, his sovereignty ceased, and death, pain, and sickness, and the innumerable plagues and calamities crowded in with it, and hell followed: Satan usurped the throne of man, and was God of this world from thenceforth, leading all captive at his will, calling every child of Adam his home-born slave, and triumphing in the destruction of the six days labour of Jehovah.

Thus fell the first man Adam, who was of the earth, and thus fell all mankind with him, and were a prey to the dragon, the serpent, that deceived and enslaved the whole world.

Doubtless God Almighty foresaw all this that happened before ever he laid the foundation of the earth, or said, "Let there be light;" but then he would not alter his design, but went on with his creation, resolved to take the opportunity of the fall to make known to heaven and earth and hell his everlasting love; an infinite value for the children
of

of men, and decreed from everlasting to be their Saviour.

He watched the whole subtle work of the enemy, and saw the entering-in and course of sin, and to comfort poor wretched Adam and Eve, who had destroyed themselves, and "sold themselves for nought," he said, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." This doctrine more and more clearly taught and revealed by the Holy Ghost to the fathers, was their consolation also, and the hope of Israel, till the Redeemer, the Desire of all nations, came.

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent his Son made of a woman, and this was the second man Adam, the Lord from heaven." Eve was the first in the transgression, and therefore was he only made of the weaker flesh of a woman, but in the form and fashion of a man, differing from us only in this, that he was without sin in his conception, birth, and life.

When he appeared in the world, it was in the person of Adam, as one who undertook to set the whole ruined state of mankind to rights, and take upon himself the blame, curse, and punishment of all, and redeem and save his people with justice and equity, and carry away whatever evil came in by the first man.

All the casualties, sicknesses, infirmities, pains, griefs, weaknesses, and whatever else were the consequences of the curse, weighed him down from his infancy, and made him a man of sorrows. His obedience to the law was the payment of our debt; and wherein we failed, and should have fallen short, and never attained to righteousness; but the curse he took away, by bearing it truly, and indeed, as it came upon us. The curse of the serpent was, "Thou shalt be cursed above all cattle, and above every beast

of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." This, as far as it related to the beasts and creeping things, he bore when in his distress; he fell down upon his face to the earth, to the dust, and there lay upon his belly twisting and twining like a smitten serpent, or like a worm and no man, washing the dust of the ground with blood. Sin had made its inroad in a garden, and in the garden of Gethsemane he tore it up by the roots, with strong cries and tears.

The curse of the woman was, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thine husband, and he shall rule over thee."

This our Saviour took upon himself, when in the weakness of the flesh of a woman (of which he spake in his anguish to his disciples, saying, "the flesh is weak") laid his hands upon his loins, and travailed, and brought his church to the birth in the agonies of hell; for then were his sorrows greatly multiplied, and he was more affrighted and weaker than any woman, because his hour was come. And he that should have been head and ruler, was servant and slave of all.

The curse of the man was, "In sorrow shalt thou eat of the fruit of the ground, and of the herb of the field, all the days of thy life; in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread, till thou return again to the ground, for out of it thou wast taken. Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return."

This curse he endured also in the strictest sense, for he eat of the fruit of the ground and of the herb of the field with sorrow all the days of his life. "He (above all mankind) was a man of sorrows and acquainted

acquainted with grief." In the sweat of his brow did he eat bread, for he laboured at his trade, was continually travelling on foot and toiling by sea, till a bloody sweat streamed over his brows, and stained and dyed his garments red; and this continued upon him till he was laid in the ground, or buried, according to the word of God.

The latter part of the sentence, namely, "Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return," I hardly dare term a part of the curse, since it would have been more cursed and heavy if this had not been added. We should not have waited for the last day in the same fallen and spoiled bodies, nor could the earth have supported us. After we had arrived at some hundred years of age, our lives would have been a burden to us, and to all round about us; and this might probably have been the reason why, after the fall, Adam was hindered to eat of the fruit of the tree of life, lest he should be thereby made immortal, or could have lived for ever in that helpless and most lamentable estate: Therefore it seems a part of the Divine Goodness, to suffer all to return back again to the dust from whence we were taken, that in the day when he should create all things new, he might raise us up in his own likeness, to die no more. With this consideration, the thoughts of sleeping and resting our wearied-out bodies in the grave is sweet, and we can ask cheerfully, "O grave, where is thy victory?"

But I will return to speak of the curse, where-with the ground was cursed, which brought forth, and was the mother of all creatures, animal and vegetable.

And the Lord said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake, thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." From the moment this
was

was said, the whole creation groaned and travailed together in pain, with all the creatures; the cry of all continually came up before God.

This curse was visibly taken away and transferred upon the head of the second Adam, when the soldiers platted the thorns, &c. and put them upon his head, and a reed in his hand, because that also seemed a part of the curse, that fruitful ground became barren and brought forth reeds and rushes. Then might it have been said with all propriety, when he came forth wearing the crown of thorns, "Behold the Man! behold the second man Adam, who taketh away the curse of the world." It is remarkable that the devil entered into the serpent to betray the first man into sin, and so also the devil entered into Judas to betray the second man Christ Jesus into the punishment. The first man's eyes were seduced to look upon the tree, and this became a snare to him, and stirred up the desire to taste. The second man's eyes also were led to see the wrath due upon that account, and it made him tremble and weep bitterly at the approach of that cup, which he was not only to taste but drink up with all the dregs thereof. As soon as Adam had sinned, his eyes were opened to know good and evil. As soon as Jesus had taken the sin upon him, his eyes were shut and blindfolded.

The first man sold himself for naught, for a little fruit, as it were, and the second was sold only for thirty pieces of silver; this was the price at which they of the children of Israel valued the Lord. The first upon his sin lost his sonship, and was a slave and vassal of Satan. The second, though he was a son and heir of all, was lower than a servant, and obedient even to the wicked, in all he suffered, and Satan seemed to lead him in triumph in bonds and chains.

Adam

Adam was stripped of all his righteousness and innocence, that he was glad of a few leaves sewed together to cover his naked body. Jesus also was stripped naked, and made a spectacle to angels and men, and endured the shame, having no covering but blood, spittle, and dust.

The first man lost the beauty and image of God, the last had his face marred more than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men.

The first was doomed to sorrow, and his wife also subjected to increase sorrow all her day. Come only to the manger, and see his poor and sorrowful birth: To the wilderness, and see his sorrows there in the forty days temptation: To Nazareth and Jerusalem, and behold his sorrowful life: To his last supper, to the garden, to the courts of Annas and Caiaphas, to the hall of Herod and Pontius Pilate; but especially come to the mountain called Golgotha, and "behold and see in it there was any sorrow like unto his sorrow, wherewith the Lord afflicted him in the day of his fierce anger." It had been said in the law, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," or, he is cursed that is hanged; but no reason, that I remember, is assigned by the Holy Ghost, why dying upon a tree should be more accursed than dying on the ground; though we may innocently assert this, as a solid reason, because sin began its reign there, and took occasion from thence to hurt and overflow the whole world.

Our Lord therefore, who came "to destroy the works of the devil," and who had step by step undone all Adam had done amiss, and repaired as he went all the breaches, got all the sin of the world upon himself, as it is written, "Not our sins only, but the sins of the whole world. On him was laid the iniquities of us all." He likewise got

got all the curse and its direful effects, all the chastisement due in the strict justice of God, and then brought all upon a tree again, and was a curse for us. In this manner, wounded and chastened, body and soul, hung the second Adam, till he had paid the last mite, and destroyed and nailed with him to the tree all that displeased his eternal Father and Godhead, excepting death, and then with his bruised heels, in his last struggle, "he trod upon the lion and the adder, the serpent and the dragon he trampled under his feet," and with all his might he bowed himself forward, and threw down and buried in the abyss of his love and mercy, all sin and devoured and slew death, spoiling and binding him that had the power of it, that is, the devil.

Thus was the world saved by the "seed of the woman," and as by one man came sin, by one man came salvation, and God could say a second time, well pleased, "and behold all was very good."

This is the sacred mystery and doctrine of the fall and restoration, as it is revealed in the scriptures of truth. But to be happy possessors of the latter is the end of all, and for this end have we been redeemed, that "as by one man's disobedience we were made sinners, so by one man's obedience we may be made righteous."

Also, that as by one man's offence judgment was passed to condemnation, so by the grace and gift of one man, which abounds over many offences, is justification come upon the condemned unto salvation.

And, though by one man's sin death has reigned over all, even over such as had not broken a command, nor sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, yet much more shall the righteous-

ness of one man reign to eternal life, over all those who are partakers of this grace by Christ Jesus.

Considering the state to which souls redeemed are recovered by our Saviour, we shall find nothing has been lost, and Satan will have got little by it with all his envy and malice; for had we kept our first estate, perhaps after spending some happy years in walking with God, we had been translated to him, but might have still continued "a little lower than the angels:" But now none of the angels are so favoured as the children of men, for to which of the angels did he say, "Thou art my sister, my spouse?" Or which of the principalities or seraphim did he promise, "Thou shalt sit down with me upon my throne, as I overcame and am set down on the Father's throne?" If we are his bride, the Lamb's wife, if we are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, if his Father is our Father, the highest angels must look upon us with respect, and take pleasure to attend on, and be servants of, souls whom their dear Maker has ransomed at so great a price. They all now know, and have learned, by means of the fall, how he loved his people, for they saw his pains and sufferings, and were witnesses to all the fatigue he went through to save us, when he humbled himself, to their eternal astonishment, to become man.

It is true, we have not been so happy in this world as if no sin had entered, but he will make it up to us in worlds to come, he will restore double to us, in bringing us into a state far better and nearer himself than that Adam was in, in Paradise; so that Satan shall see he has struck at us in vain, and we ourselves shall see for evermore that grace and mercy superabounded the fall, and the blessings we get in the redemption by Christ, shall be infinitely more than what we lost or suffered by the offence of Adam. This consideration made the
ancients

ancients venture to say, 'O happy sin! 'O happy fall!' But with all our hearts we can say, 'O happy Saviour! O happy salvation!'

Again, As we have been lost in Adam, and scattered in the dark and cloudy day, so in Christ shall the souls that were lost be found, and "to him shall the gathering together of the people be."

And, again, "As we have borne the image of the earthly Adam, so shall we be renewed and bear the image of the heavenly."

And lastly, "As in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all rise and be made alive," and this is the resurrection of the dead.

Of these I design to speak; and first, of the two men, namely, Adam and Christ; the author of the fall, and the author of the redemption.

Now the first man was of the earth, and formed out of the clay or dust of the ground, and should not appear of divine extraction, though his spirit was God's offspring; yet was "he lower than the angels," but the lord and head of all beasts, birds, serpents, fishes, and reptiles, and whatever was created in the world. The "second man is the Lord, the Jehovah from heaven," who, to manifest the exceeding riches of his grace, and so save his lost creatures, humbled himself, and put on the same weak and fallen flesh and blood and nature which they had: he for the suffering of death, which otherwise would have been impossible, came from heaven, and was lower than the angels; nor entered again his glory, nor was received back into his heavens till he recovered the world, and saved it "out of the hands of him that was stronger than we."

The mediatorial office, as it is called, the which he yet retains, and will retain, "till he has subdued all things to himself;" and therefore as the

Son of man, as the seed of the woman, he reigns and has a kingdom, which must increase till the "last enemy is destroyed, and God shall be all in all." In this respect he acts still, but dies no more, nor is accursed, and may suffer no more. The first man Adam was a living soul, that is, he had not only a soul or spirit as beasts and all living creatures have; but he had the life divine, he lived as God and the holy angels lived, and this life he lost, or died to God in the day of his sin. In this dead state all mankind are born, and without the true life, all his children have been conceived in sin, and have been imperfect, and not the image of God. A natural man is dead while he lives; so our Saviour and his apostles have taught. Now the "last Adam was a quickening spirit." He was the Lord; the same Lord and God who had some thousand years before breathed into Adam the life when he became a living soul: he came therefore to give life to the world, and that they might have it more abundantly than Adam, for he had life, but could possibly lose it, as it fell out; but Christ gives "eternal life, and this life we have in him." "He is our life," and we shall have it more abundantly, even for ever and ever.

Hence we may observe with divine pleasure, that after he had redeemed the world and was risen again, he breathed a second time upon his disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Thus again they received the life of God, and became living souls, to die and be lost no more.

The next thing proper to be mentioned is, "How by one man's disobedience we were made sinners, and by one man's obedience we are made righteous."

One who denies the doctrine of original sin must be wicked and a hypocrite; wicked, because he denies

nies the tenor of all the scriptures; a hypocrite, because he knows lust, pride, anger, covetousness, and many other sinful dispositions are in his nature, and have grown up with him. It is written in the Psalms, "When God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, they were all gone out of the way, they were altogether corrupt and become filthy or abominable, there was none righteous, there was none that could do good, no not one. He had made man upright, but he had found out many inventions. The thoughts of their heart were evil continually. They were transgressors from the womb, conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity. By one man's disobedience they were made sinners." It was impossible for Adam to beget children otherwise than in his own likeness, in the same nature and with the same corrupt mind. If a fountain is bitter, the streams cannot be sweet; if the tree be degenerate and wild, it cannot yield good fruit. Can a fig-tree bear olive-berries, or a vine, figs? Such as is the stock, such are the branches; and as all were created in Adam, in him all died, and sin hath reigned to death in all. But lest, through the cunning of the grand deceiver, men might be brought to reason about the matter, and tempted to charge God with folly, or unrighteous judgment, in passing condemnation upon all on account of the sin of one, as Israel once did when they used that proverb, "the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge;" and so concluded, the ways of the Lord were not equal: I say, on this account, as well as with other divine views, God gave the law, and so stops every mouth, and makes all the world guilty before him. For when it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things of the law to do them," then must every

sinner be dumb, and especially when the Holy Spirit preaches and opens the law to his self-righteous heart, as in St. James's epistle, "He that offendeth in one point is guilty of the whole," and he can thenceforward make no reply, but loath and abhor himself in dust and ashes, and see deeply the need of one man's obedience to make him righteous.

Whoever stumbles at the doctrine of original sin, he necessarily is offended with the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness; but where the first is felt and known in the heart, there the doctrine of the Lord our righteousness is the most glad news and the gospel of peace.

Our Saviour was therefore obedient under the law, and fulfilled all righteousness, that his obedience might as surely make us righteous, as the disobedience of Adam had made us sinners; for Christ took our cursed and sad place, was made sin for us and reckoned as a transgressor, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. His sufferings and chastisement have quieted the angry justly offended spirit of the law, and to those who believe in Jesus, and can trust in his shelter, their faith is reckoned the same as righteousness, and receives of him their righteousness, their obedience and merits, so that they who are in the faith can say, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness." The inheritance is then secured, the breach made up, and the soul satisfied about standing before God. Also as deeply, distinctly and feelingly as we were convinced of sin and our wicked nature, so deeply, distinctly, and feelingly does the Holy Ghost convince us of righteousness, to the comfort of our souls, and the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the same manner as judgment was passed to condemnation by one offence, so is it averted by means

means of the unjust condemning of ~~our~~ our Saviour, and through his grace or free gift all our many offences are forgiven, and "we are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law," and cleared and set free from all demands of justice. "Who can condemn us, it is Christ that justifieth? Yea, there is no condemnation to such as are in Christ Jesus." They are acquitted, and the hand-writing that was against us, and which was contained in the law, is blotted out in the blood of Jesus, and nailed with his body to the tree. Nor are men thus saved left in a liberty to live afterwards as they please, God forbid! The same blood that blotted out their curse, cancelled their bond, and paid their debt, also washes the heart, and abolishes "the old man with his deeds, that henceforth we may live to him who lived and died and rose again, that he might be the Lord of the dead and of the living."

But farther: If sin was of that dreadful nature, that, by one man's act of disobedience death could reign and make such havock over all adults who have sinned, and infants who had broken no law and yet live in pain, and feel what pangs, and sickness, and death mean, so much more must the righteousness of the man Christ who is the Lord from heaven, and whose sufferings and obedience, or, as it is called, his active and passive righteousness, reign to the subduing, pardoning, covering, and utterly abolishing of sin and its effects, out of body and soul! and this it does and shall do in all his seed, i. e. in all believers, till there is no more curse nor sin, nor evil, nor sorrow, nor sighing, but all tears shall be wiped away, and all things made new.

So in the driving out of Adam, his children have been scattered and lost like sheep in every land;
but

but as Christ has willingly left his Paradise, and is become a Shepherd to seek and to save such as were lost, we who are returned, through mercy, to this Shepherd and Bishop of souls, shall lose nothing finally, in that we shall be kept by him in his sure fold here, and in due order be round about the throne with him in eternal life: and in that day, when, like a shepherd, he shall divide between his flocks, we shall follow him and be at his right hand in everlasting safety.

We have now borne the image of the earthly Adam, we have followed him in his disobedience and unfaithfulness, we have felt, to our sorrow, his sinful and corrupt nature, and ate bread in sorrow also: we have groaned under the bondage and servitude of the enemy, and are sinners, but we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Adam. As was he earthy, so were all his posterity earthy, and loved the earth and things of sense: We have wallowed in the mire, and strove to fill ourselves with the husks which swine do eat: we have had an earthy nature, earthy desires and views, and lost entirely the divine image; but we shall be born again in Christ, and created anew in him, with another heart and a new spirit; and this is also a transcript of the first birth. Eve was properly the first who was born, as it is written, "the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man." God caused a deep sleep to seize Adam, and then was born and built up out of his side his help-mate, whom he knew and confessed as bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. Thus is the new-birth, or second birth, the second man Adam, who felt the pangs and anguish of a travailing woman, fell into a deep sleep upon the cross, and when his side was opened, blood and water came out, and became the only true laver of regeneration. Here
the

the Spirit of the Son which he breathed out, washes and new-forms all the children of God, and the Holy Ghost, in this divine mystery, operates chiefly, and is a mother to us, for we are born again of the Holy Ghost, and so one said who spoke by the Spirit afar off, "Under the apple-tree (i. e. the cross whereon Christ died, and was among the son, as the apple among the trees of the wood) thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee." Our nursing mother is the church, the new Jerusalem, who is the mother of us all; but we were not born or made children of God by her labour, or by any pangs and travail of her. It was the second Adam's pangs brought us to the birth, and the Holy Ghost alone brought us forth. Therefore said the prophet to the church, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into joy, thou that didst not travail, thou virgin-daughter of Sion, for thou hast more children than the married wife, saith the Lord." This is not a fancy or pleasing idea, but a thing real; the spirit or ghost of Jesus breathed out, we receive. It is, "the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The blood he shed washes us, and his water is the very true baptismal stream in which "we, who were children of wrath, are made children of grace," and shall be confessed by our Saviour at his appearing, as Adam confessed his wife, as it is written, "We are members of his body, his flesh, and his bone." People thus born again, receive again the image of God, and as they wore once the image of the earthly Adam, they wear now the image of the heavenly: they have his mind, his love and gentleness, his loveliness and meekness, his faithfulness and the fruits of his Spirit are in them; and indeed they are like him, they are christians born out of Christ,

Christ, and shall be counted to the Lord for a generation: he can say, "Behold me and the children thou hast given to be with me."

But I have only spoke hitherto of the restoration, as far as it concerns soul and spirit; for though our bodies are washed with the pure water, and made clean temples of the Holy Ghost, yet our bodies are not changed or renewed now, but will be sown vile bodies and return to the dust, for out of that they were taken, but they shall rise again; for "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." The resurrection is general, and both just and unjust shall rise again, only every man in his own order; first Christ who is the head rose, and "is become the first fruits of them that slept;" afterwards, in the first resurrection, shall they that are Christ's rise; then the leaven of Christ's body, which the Holy Ghost, like a woman, hid in the three measures of meal, that is to say, in the body, soul and spirit, shall have leavened the whole lump, and our bodies shall be like the glorious body of our Saviour. Blessed shall be all they who have a part in this first resurrection, for the dead in Christ shall rise first, the second death shall have no power over them. These our Saviour will raise up in the last day and bring with him. It does not appear that they will be awaked or raised by the sound of the last trumpet, but it is as if they should all sleep in their beds till the voice of the Son of God should call them, and then rise and meet him in the air, and come with songs of everlasting joy!

Then shall the rest of the dead live, but must tremble to stand before the Son of man. They must be ashamed, because they slighted his redemption and the day of the Lord's jubilee. They continued of the earth earthy, and were not born again of the heavenly Adam. The state of such must be
fearful

fearful and very miserable, for these must see all their misdeeds and secret sins come into judgment, and hear a sentence which is very terrible. It is as much as if God the Saviour should say, Ye have chosen the slavery of the devil, and would not be saved out of his condemnation: "Ye would not come to me that ye might have life;" ye loved the world better than me; my blood of the New Testament ye trod under your feet, and despised my spirit, who was able to have healed you and gathered you under the shelter of my salvation, "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not," ye would not be healed. "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

With the children of God it will be quite otherwise: they were lost but are found; they were dead, but are alive again, body and soul, to live for ever and ever with God their Saviour, and die no more. Then will he get his due honour and thanks and blessings from his people: then will he be beloved and admired of his saints, and they shall be satisfied with his likeness, and abide and stay with their dear Lord and Saviour, and return no more out, but adore him for his love, his humiliation, and death for ever.

May we all be of this happy number! Amen.

END OF VOL. I.

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Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need.

Heb. iv. 16.

